

ECHO IRELAND

IRISH RADIO TRANSMITTERS SOCIETY

JUNE 2014 - 82 YEARS



The Editors of

CQ
The Radio Amateur's Journal

Take pleasure in awarding this Certificate of Merit to

EI7M
Ops: EI3JE EI3KD EI8IR EI3JZ G4CLA M1DSE EI3DP EI5GM

In recognition of the achievement of winning the

2013 WORLD-WIDE DX CONTEST SSB
Multi-Operator Single-Transmitter
#1 Ireland

A total score of **19,962,126** points was computed on the basis of Zones, Countries and Stations worked. In witness of this achievement, we hereby affix our signatures.

#6 World **Ireland Record** **#1 Europe**

K5ZD
Contest Director

D.S. Moore W2VU
Editor

CQ WW SSB CONTEST - 2013 - EI CERTIFICATE WINNERS

EI1A	Single Op, Low Power, All Bands	863,702	#1 Ireland	#13 Europe	
EI3HDB	Rookie, Low Power, All Bands	785,547	EI Record	# 3 Europe	# 3 World
EI4GXB	SO Assisted, Low Power, 10 Metres	351,250	EI Record	# 6 Europe	#19 World
EI4GYB	Single Op, High Power, All Bands	1,198,410	#1 Ireland		
EI4II	Single Op, QRP, 20 Metres	66,847	EI Record	# 2 Europe	# 4 World
EI5JQ	SO Assisted, High Power, All Bands	4,629,020	EI Record	#13 Europe	
EI6JK	Single Op, High Power, 10 Metres	748,935	EI Record	# 9 Europe	
EI7JZ	SO Assisted, Low Power, All Bands	589,698	#1 Ireland		
EI7M	Multi Op, Single TX, All Bands	19,962,126	EI Record	# 1 Europe	# 6 World
EI8GXB	SO Assisted, High Power, 20 Metres	170,595	#1 Ireland	#15 Europe	
EI8KB	Single Op, Low Power, 10 Metres	137,858	#1 Ireland	#19 Europe	
EI9E	Multi Op, Multi TX, All Bands	6,299,292	EI Record	#13 Europe	
EI9KC	Single Op, Low Power, 15 Metres	75,900	#1 Ireland	#14 Europe	
EI/EB1WM	Single Op, QRP, 10 Metres	1,690	#1 Ireland		

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When is my membership due for renewal?

Your membership renewal date is shown on the wrapper in which the newsletter is posted – above the name and address. For those who receive Echo Ireland by electronic distribution, the renewal date is included in the email alert sent when a new issue is published.

Members who pay by direct debit will see “(DD)” after the renewal date.

Use www.irts.ie/renew to renew your membership at any time; you can also renew at a Rally, or by sending your annual subscription directly to the IRTS Treasurer.

Please renew early to keep our postage and other costs down.

Membership is extended by 12 months from the normal renewal date whenever a payment is received.

Joe Ryan, Membership Records Officer
memrecords@irts.ie

Are you receiving EiNews?

EiNews is the monthly electronic publication from IRTS. If you have not already done so, send a request to memrecords@irts.ie to receive it by email at the beginning of each month.

Input for Echo Ireland to newsteam@irts.ie

News Bulletins and Readers

Sunday				
Dublin	1100	7.123	SSB	Sean EI7CD, Ger EI4GXB, Paul EI2CA
Wicklow	1130	3.680	SSB	(as Gaeilge) Paddy EI7GK, Danny EI6GS
Dublin	1145	145.525	FM	Tony EI5EM, John EI7JG, Frank EI6EF, Liam EI3HK
Clare	1200	3.650	SSB	Ger EI4GXB, Sean EI7CD
Mayo	2000		FM	145.600 - 433.450 - 70.375 - 50.450
				Padraic EI9JA, John EI7FAB, Mike EI2EO, John EI3JM
				Dominic EI9JS
Tipperary	2030	145.450	FM	Tommy EI2IT, Eddie EI3FFB
Monday				
Cork	2000	145.750	FM	Vincent EI7HN
Limerick	2000	145.725	FM	Brian EI9AL, Simon EI7ALB, Ger EI4GXB, Liam EI7DSB
				Tony EI2AW
Louth	2000	145.675		Thos EI2JD, Anthony EI2KC, Jim EI2HJB
Tuesday				
Waterford	2130	145.650	FM	David EI6GVB
North Cork	2000	430.925	FM	Lisa EI9GSB

Silent Key Fr. TT Vaughan EI3CB

The death has occurred of Fr TT Vaughan EI3CB. Fr TT passed away peacefully on Friday 21st March at the care unit in St Patrick's Missionary Kiltegan. Born in Ballydesmond Co Cork, Fr TT was the resident HAM on Bere Island for many years until his ill health. His legacy lives on in the warm welcome that is shown to all HAMS who operate from Bere Island EU-121 to this day. May he rest in peace.

Outgoing QSL Bureau Address

Tony Baldwin EI8JK
Rathlin
Kilcrohane
Bantry
Co. Cork

IRTS Radio News Service

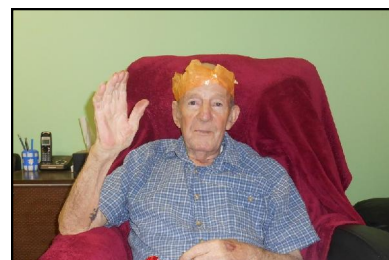
Items for inclusion in the IRTS Radio News and/or the Echo Ireland Newsletter can be sent by email to

newsteam@irts.ie

Deadline for inclusion in the Sunday news bulletin is 1200 on Thursday. Urgent items can be telephoned to the Editor,

Aidan EI7JC on 085-7100511

Silent Key Con Murphy EI7ID/VK6PM



The death has occurred of Con Murphy EI7ID /VK6PM who was an Honorary Member of IRTS. Con was born in 1926 in Rathcoole, Co. Dublin and obtained his licence in 1957. He was a former member of the Irish Defence Forces. Con lived in Rathfarnham until 1969 when he emigrated to VK6 land. He had been home about twelve times in the intervening years and always met up with EIs he was in contact with as VK6PM.

Con was very active on the air in EI, was a committed IRTS member and there was hardly an IRTS field day in which he did not play a prominent part. He was made an Honorary Member of the Society just before he departed for VK6.

He continued to be very active on the radio as VK6PM and held regular skeds with friends in EI. He died recently in Toodyay, Western Australia and was buried in Cruagh Cemetery after Requiem Mass in Rathfarnham.

He will be sadly missed by his family and friends. To his wife Breda, to his daughters Peg, Una, Fiona, Grania and Martha and to his son Desmond we extend our sincerest sympathy.
May he rest in peace.

Online Access to Echo Ireland

If you would like to have online access to the complete library of Echo Ireland issues from 2001 onwards and receive new issues of Echo Ireland by way of electronic download instead of in hard copy, please advise the Membership Records Officer.

Include your call sign and email address in the request and send it to: memrecords@irts.ie

Awards presented at the 2014 AGM

Arup Cup

Exceptional service to the Society or to Amateur Radio.

Jordan Cummins EI4HLB

Michael Collins Memorial Trophy

Exceptional service to the Society or to Amateur Radio

Ger McNamara EI4GXB

Pat Conway Perpetual Memorial Trophy

Exceptional service to the Society or to Amateur Radio

Seán Donelan EI4GK

Sheila Piper Cup

Service to the IRTS News Service

Anthony Murphy EI2KC

The President's Cup

Presented at the discretion of the President of the Society

Awarded for exceptional service to the hobby

Dave Moore EI4BZ

The EI3AV Perpetual Cup

Leading IRTS Regional Representative

Mark Condon EI6JK

John Ash Chapman Shield

For significant promotion of Amateur Radio to the public

Thos Caffrey EI2DJ

Ian Morris Memorial Trophy

SWL with the highest number of DXCC entities

in the previous calendar year

No Entry

EI7IQ National 6 Metre Shield

Leading EI/EJ IRTS member for 6 metre activity in the

previous calendar year

Dave Deane EI9FBB

EI7IQ National 4 Metre Shield

Leading EI/EJ IRTS member for 4 metre activity in the

previous calendar year

Tom Cocking EI4DQ

Lough Boffin Shield

Leading SWL in the Winter 80m Counties Contest

No Entry

Lough Ree Shield

SSB Portable Section Winter 80m Counties Contest

Dave Deane EI9FBB/P

Lough Allen Shield

SSB Fixed Section Winter 80m Counties Contest

Declan Horan EI9FVB

Lough Derg Shield

SSB/CW Fixed Section Winter 80m Counties Contest

Paul Martin EI2CA

Lough Boderg Shield

SSB/CW Portable Section Winter 80m Counties Contest

Joe Ryan EI7GY/P

The EI5AJ Perpetual Cup

SSB/CW Fixed Section Summer 80m Counties Contest

Thos Caffrey EI2JD

Folan Shield & Kevin Freeny Trophy

Home Construction

No Entries

IRTS DX Trophy

Leading IRTS Member in the Single Operator sections

of the annual RSGB IOTA contest

Pat O'Connor EI9HX

Hal Hodgens Trophy

Top scoring IRTS Member in the 12-hour CW

section of the RSGB IOTA contest

Joe Ryan EI7GY

IRTS IOTA Trophy

Leading island (EJ) DXpedition station in the annual

RSGB IOTA contest

Papa Lima DX Group (Inismore) EJ1Y

Pete Daly Memorial Cup

Winning station in the Open section of the IRTS CW Field Day

Gerard Scannell EI5KE/P

Paddy Smyth Memorial Cup

Leading station in the Restricted section of the

IRTS CW Field Day

Cork Radio Club EI1C/P

Paddy Daly Microphone

Winning station in the Open section of the IRTS SSB Field

Day

Avondhu Radio Club EI1E/P

IRTS HF Shield

Leading station in the Restricted section of the

IRTS SSB Field Day

Shannon Basin Radio Club EI3Z/P

Thomond Trophy

Winning station in the Open section of the

IRTS VHF/UHF Field Day

Network South Area REC EI9E/P

Shandon Trophy

Winning station in the Restricted section of the

IRTS VHF/UHF Field Day

Tipperary ARG EI7T/P

The SDR 50MHz Trophy

Winning station in the 50MHz Restricted section of the

IRTS VHF/UHF Field Day

Tipperary ARG EI13CLAN

The Oriel Trophy

Winning station in the 70MHz Restricted section of the

IRTS VHF/UHF Field Day

Tom McDermott EI9CJ/P

Slievenamon Shield

Winning station in the 70cm Restricted section of the

IRTS VHF/UHF Field Day

Tipperary ARG EI7TRG/P

Tom Donnellan EI9BG Cup

Top IRTS Member in the CW Single-Op section of the

CQWW DX contest

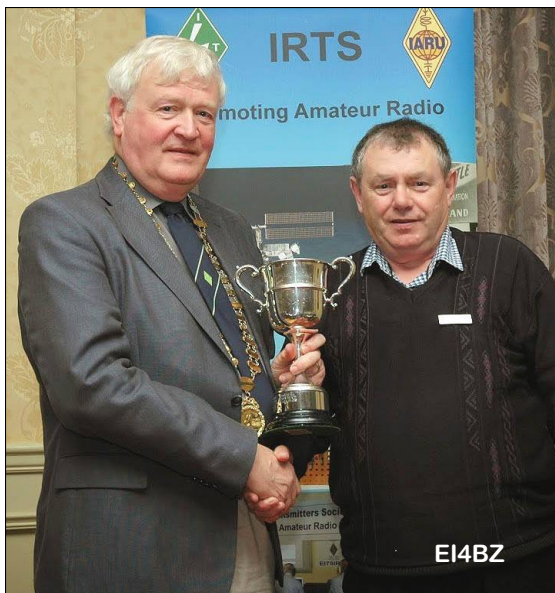
Michal Konopka EI3KG

Dermot Cowley EI2AK Memorial Cup

Winning station in the 1.2GHz Restricted section of the

IRTS VHF/UHF Field Day

Dundalk Amateur Radio Society, EI7DAR/P



Photos by Joe EI7GY





HF Happenings

with Anthony Murphy EI2KC

As I write this, the sun is shining down through the velux windows in the shack, something it doesn't do in the winter time because it is too low. Summer is on its way, and with it, hopefully some bright fine weather which will enable you to do some gardening. And by gardening, of course I mean antenna repair and erection!

Last time I wrote, it was late winter, and what a winter. It might not have been cold - we only had a few nights of frost - but it certainly was windy, as reported in the last issue. In fact, there was more wind after that issue went to press. It seemed that almost every ham with antennas in the air was reporting some damage. Almost nobody escaped.

After what seemed like an incredibly action-packed early winter, especially in November when there were, on one particular day, twelve different DXpeditions on air at the same time.

It's a bit of a case of feast to famine since then, especially since the last column. There have been some very good activations, but the number of rare ones on the air fell steeply. It was never going to be possible to maintain the pace of November. Several of us were suffering from pile-up fatigue and were glad of a break.

As I wrote the previous installment, the FT5ZM Amsterdam Island DXpedition was on air. According to their online log, there are no fewer than 79 EI callsigns in their log. It was a much sought-after DXCC, the seventh most wanted at the time, and had been last activated in 1998.

Band Conditions

Conditions so far in 2014 have been largely great. I say largely because they took a good nosedive over the past two weeks. To give a stark illustration of this, I managed 14 QSOs on eight bands with the TX6G DXpedition to Austral Islands in the last week and a half of March. But in early April, I managed only three QSOs with the A35V/A35X activation of Tonga. OK, there were only two ops on that one, but the point is that I failed to work them above 17 metres. In fact, I failed to hear them on 10 metres and 12 metres at all, and only had a faint whiff of them on 15 metres.



And yet, in the early spring I could work Australia and the Far East in the early mornings (sometimes 7am, sometimes earlier) on 10 metres using my trusty Antron 99 and 100 watts. But in the past fortnight, I've hardly heard a signal on those bands. As I write, the numbers are coming back up, with the sunspot number sitting at 263 today. That's one of the highest peaks of this cycle. It's hit 280 a couple of times, once in November 2013, and then in early March of this year. I hope the huge peak of 300 hit on 16th April, just a few days ago, is a sign of more to come!!! That's the highest it's been since the peak of the last cycle. I'm hoping that this is a delayed peak, just as we saw a delayed minimum in 2008-2009. Things should have picked up in 2009, but the numbers really didn't come good until 2011. So the sun could have a few more surprises for us yet.

One of the vagaries of solar activity is that the production of flares and CMEs increases around the time of solar maximum. At the peak of the cycle, there can be as many as three CMEs per day. At minimum, there might only be one every five days. The arrival of a flare to earth can severely dampen HF propagation. One day you can be working the Pacific with 50 watts and a Buddipole, and the next you might not hear anything on even a cubical quad or a SteppIR! And then there's the SID. No, not Sid Little - Sudden Ionospheric Disturbance. That can cause something akin to a total wipeout, as the operators on the TX6G Austral Islands DXpedition found out:



“Saturday morning our time (Saturday evening GMT), we had what we think was a Sudden Ionospheric Disturbance (SID). None of us has experienced anything so dramatic before. We were running Europe on the high bands with big signals and suddenly it was as though someone turned out the lights – from pile-ups to zero signals in about 30 seconds! Fortunately the bands gradually came back although we are still experiencing slow fading on most of the high bands.” (source: TX6G.com)

All we can hope for is that the peak maintains some excitement, and that it doesn't fizzle out quickly. We could easily find ourselves on a quick downward curve, heading into another prolonged minimum. None of us wants that. It's no fun having days and weeks pass with no signals on 10 metres and 12 metres.

Ireland's Young Hams

Since the last issue of Echo Ireland was published, the annual general meeting of the Irish Radio Transmitters Society (IRTS) was held. I was delighted to hear that the Arup Cup was awarded to 14-year-old Jordan Cummins, EI4HLB, who is Ireland's youngest ham. Jordan has become the third member of his family to get licensed. His dad is Anthony EI3GAB and his mum is Lisa EI9GSB, both of whom are well known as members of North Cork Radio Group. Lisa is now also a member of the IRTS committee.

It's wonderful to see young people getting licensed. The future of this hobby depends on the Jordan Cummins of the world. One of the downsides of our hobby is that it has a silvery-haired image. People think hams are grey old men. They forget that women can get licences too! And, as Jordan has shown, it is well within the grasp of a youngster to get a ham licence.

Jordan EI4HLB is quite active on HF, and is very deserving of a mention here for his efforts! In a short space of time, he has notched up a healthy rake of DXCC into his log. In the month before publication of this column, he had worked the following DX entities: 5R Madagascar; 8P Barbados; HZ Saudi Arabia; A4 Oman; VK Australia; BY China; YB Indonesia; KL7 Alaska; A7 Qatar; PJ2 Curacao; 4U1ITU ITU HQ; GI Northern Ireland; GM Scotland; 4O Montenegro; TR Gabon; 5V7 Togo; ZF Cayman Islands; VU India; VP2E Anguilla; HI Dominican Republic; 9J Zambia; LU Argentina; ZL New Zealand; ER Moldova; KP4 Puerto Rico; TF Iceland; C31 Andorra; A6 United Arab Emirates; JA Japan; CO Cuba; V4 St. Kitts & Nevis; TA Turkey; 9Y Trinidad & Tobago; YV Venezuela; 9H Malta; FG Guadeloupe; C6 Bahamas.

I think you'll agree that's a healthy tally of new ones in the space of just one month! I expect that pretty soon we will see Jordan in the Club Log league tables for various DXpeditions. I certainly hope so. Welcome to the hobby Jordan, and I hope there are many more youngsters (and women) who join our ranks soon.

Recent DX

As reported already, the number of DXpeditions has been somewhat sparse of late, but nevertheless there has been some great action on the bands, and some relatively rare ones were activated.

One of the rarer ones to pop up was S9TF in Principe Island off the Atlantic coast of Africa. They gave me five slots, and I know that a number of other EI DXers made it into the log. They have also recently confirmed QSOs via Logbook of the World. The log is online at <https://secure.clublog.org/charts/?c=S9TF>.

Also in February, Reunion Island was activated by a group which included two well-known Irish operators, Dave Deane EI9FBB and Jeremy Sheehan EI5GM (photo on Page 6). I managed eight QSOs with them on six bands, and a total of 47 EIs made it into their log. Top of the pile was John EI7BA with 18 slots, followed by Ark EI9KC on 12 and Don EI6IL on 11. You can check the log online at <http://www.clublog.org/charts/?c=TO7CC#>

The extremely-well-travelled DXer Vlad UA4WHX has been on HK0 Providencia, CE0Y Easter Island and also HC8 Galapagos. Hopefully he has given you the joy of a brand new one, or at the very least some new band slots. Who knows where he will pop up next? (Coincidentally, about an hour after writing this paragraph, Vlad popped up as ZP9/UA4WHX from Paraguay on 12 metres SSB, where I worked him for a new band slot!!)

A group of German and Polish hams activated 4S7 Sri Lanka in March and gave us the chance to fill out some band slots for what is still a relatively rare one. They operated under three call signs: 4S7DFG, 4S7FRG and 4S7LXG. Thankfully, I now only need this one on 80 metres (and of course top band!). You can check your own QSOs with them in their online log at <http://www.d17df.com/4s7/log.php?cmd=search>

If there was a 'DXpedition of the year' award, I would certainly have the TX6G Austral Island activation on the shortlist. This group of British hams activated Raivavae Island and took advantage of great openings to Europe to allow many of us to grab this rare one on several bands. There were some complaints on the DX clusters by the



Americans and others about the fact that TX6G was calling 'EU only' for prolonged periods, but they stuck to their guns, and thankfully so, to give us a chance to nab them in marginal conditions on the high bands. My 17m CW QSO with them was at 11.25pm local time - showing just how good the conditions were at times. My personal best and favourite QSO was on 80m CW, using my compromise inverted-V, at 6.30am on the morning of March 25th. It's always a great pleasure for me to work new ones - and especially rare ones - using the very limited antennas at my QTH. No fewer than 55 EI calls are in their online log at <http://www.clublog.org/charts/?c=TX6G#>. Top of the pile, on 13 QSOs apiece, were John EI7BA, Don EI6IL and the author of this column. Well done to all who made contact, and also very well done to the team for their excellent efforts.

Another rare one to come on the air in March was VU4K, Krishna, operating from Andaman and Nicobar Islands. He gave me country #305 on March 21st when I made it through the pile on 12m SSB. Krishna had some very interesting operating techniques, and would call EU by number, alternating with North America by number. Some people got frustrated by it, but they perhaps failed to understand how difficult it was on his side. He said all he could hear was a massive 'wall of noise' covering 20-25kHz of the band. He found it difficult to pick a single letter out of the huge pile, never mind a full callsign. I am very grateful for having worked the 40th most-wanted DXCC on two bands. Well done Krishna, and indeed all the Irish operators who made it into his log, especially those for whom it was a new DXCC.

Coming on air around the same time in March was ZL7AAA, Chatham Island. One member of the team, OE2SNL, was active in advance of the DXpedition, and I worked him as an all-time new DXCC on 40m CW. I also had two QSOs with ZL7AAA, on 20 SSB and 17 SSB. However, this particular activation turned out to be a bit of a disappointment, as they were rarely active on any more than one or two slots simultaneously, and seemed to spend a lot of their time on 20 and 17 metres. There is no league table for this one on Clublog, but you can check individual callsigns at <http://www.clublog.org/charts/?c=ZL7AAA>

In late March, we had the pleasure of hearing the very rare Mellish Reef on the air as the VK9MT team hit the bands. All was going well, with many Irish DX hunters getting into their log. However, an approaching storm system threatened to bring an abrupt early end to the activation. They kept an eye on it, and eventually decided to leave the island early. But not before 33 EIs made it through. Congratulations to everyone who logged them, especially if it was a new one for you. Mellish Reef was DXCC #306 for me. Special mention to Erik EI4KF, who managed an impressive eight slots, with Ark EI9KC on six and Don EI6IL and John EI7BA on five apiece.

In April, a small team of German ops activated KH8 American Samoa. Unfortunately their activation coincided with a noticeable lull in conditions, and they were difficult to hear on the higher frequencies. Despite this, I managed a 12m CW QSO with them, but found it tough going to get another

QSO. Hopefully some of the other DXers out there fared better.....

Upcoming DXpeditions and Activations

A3 Tonga

Masa, JA0RQV, will once again be active from Tonga. This time he will activate Niutoputapu Island (OC-191) at the very small northern end of Tongan territory, and will signing as A35JP/P between May 28th and June 3rd. Operations will be on 80-6 meters using CW and SSB. His equipment is an IC-7000 (w/100W) into a vertical antenna. Activity will be limited and much is depending on the availability of electric power since there is no commercial electric power at all. He must find a generator or car battery. In case his flight is cancelled, Masa will be active from Vava'u Island (OC-064) or Tongatapu Island (OC-049) instead. For more details and updates, visit his Blog page at: <http://blog.goo.ne.jp/rqv>

S0 Western Sahara

One of two countries on the African continent - along with E3 Eritrea - that I still need as an All-Time New One (ATNO). Naama, S01A, will be active from Western Sahara some time in early May, along with S01WS (Amateur Radio Union Sahrawi club station) and S01AH, are expected to receive their equipment as this publication is going to press. They expect to be operational on 80 metres through 6 metres. Hopefully you will all get a chance to log them either a new one, or to fill out some much-needed band slots. More information: <http://saharadx.jimdo.com>

YV0 Aves Island

As we went to press, the YW0A Aves Island team had not yet released the dates of their activation of the 30th most rare DXCC. They had received confirmation from the naval authorities confirming their sailing date, but had not yet released a schedule to the public. Their activity is expected imminently. For more information, see their website: <http://www.avesisland.info/>

V6 Micronesia

Shuji JA1FMN will be active from Weno Island OC-011 in Micronesia as V63PSK between May 14 and 17. He will be QRV on PSK and JT65 on 20m through 10m. QSL via home call.

FO French Polynesia

Stan EI6DX will be active from Bora Bora in French Polynesia, IOTA OC-067, from May 7th to 18th. His equipment will consist of a K3, an Acom 1000 and a CrankIR vertical. This will be a holiday-style activation on CW and SSB, 80m through 10m. For more information, see Stan's website at <http://www.ei6dx.com/>

B7CRA Paracel Islands

A group of Chinese hams will be active from the rare IOTA AS-143 (Yongxing Island), Paracel Islands sometime between now and mid May. The actual operation period depends on the schedule of the ship. Only one radio is allowed to be on the air 24 hours around the clock due to the limit of ops by the local authority. The assigned callsign will be B7CRA. QSL via BA4EG.

T30 Western Kiribati

An experienced team will be activating Western Kiribati,

Southern Tarawa Atoll, in October, using the callsign T30D. Team members are Uwe, DJ9HX; Rudolf, DK3CG; Sid, DM2AYO; Dietmar, DL2HWA; Georg, DL4SVA; Bert, DL2RNS; Heiko, DL1RTL; Juergen, DF7TT; Olaf, DL7JOM; Guenter, DL2AWG; Hans DL6JGN and Rolf, DL7VEE. They plan to be QRV from 160 to 6m in CW, SSB and RTTY with at least four simultaneous stations with 500-watts amps around the clock. More information closer to the time.

FR/T Tromelin

Tromelin Island, the ninth-most-wanted DXCC, will be activated in late October under the callsign FT4TA. For more information, see their website <http://www.tromelin2014.com/en/>. Updates closer to the time.

As you can see, the number of major dxpeditions and activations is not high. We were spoiled last year with a huge level of DX operations. In case I missed something, you can keep an eye out on forthcoming activations by watching a number of websites and DX bulletins. These include:

OPDX - <http://www.papays.com/opdx.html> - don't forget to subscribe for a once-a-week bulletin delivered by email.

DX World - <http://dx-world.net/> - an excellent website packed with information about all the forthcoming dxpeditions, activations, IOTA activity etc.

DX Italia - <http://www.marioi2mqp.it/> - subscribe to the once-a-week email bulletin about DX. It's short and sweet and colourful.

DX Coffee - <http://www.dxcoffee.com/eng/> - a nice DX website with daily updates about activations. You can subscribe for a daily update via email.

I hope you enjoy your HF activity between now and the next issue. I'd be delighted to hear about your exploits - please send me an email to hamradioireland@gmail.com. I am hoping to activate Cape Clear Island EU-121 with the EJ7NET team from July 12th to 17th. I might hear you in the pile-ups. Until then, enjoy the bands...

73 and Slán go fóil,
Anthony EI2KC

IRTS Brendan Awards



Brendan Trophies

The Brendan Awards are designed to encourage experimentation with two-way Trans-Atlantic communications using the Two Metre Amateur Band.

The **Brendan Trophies** and **Brendan Shields** will be presented to each of the operators of the two amateur radio stations which first establish two-way communication in the relevant category between the continents of Europe and America (North or South) within the Two Metre Amateur Band. If a station has more than one operator at the time of the contact, then the award will be made jointly to those operators who can show that they contributed materially to the contact at that time.

The **Brendan Plate** will be awarded to the Receiving station or to both the Receiving and Transmitting station where the Transmitting station has specifically attempted a Trans-Atlantic contact.

More information is available on the IRTS website at www.irts.ie/brendan

A group of Amateur Radio operators from Atlantic Canada will operate from Pouch Cove, Newfoundland, from 4-12 July 2014 in a bid to complete a 2 meter Trans-Atlantic QSO and claim the Brendan Trophy.

The expedition will operate from Maidenhead Grid GN37os on 144.155 MHz. It will run 750 watts into a 30 metre long rope yagi with a gain of more than 23dB over a dipole. The group will concentrate its efforts on JT65B, a digital mode that offers greatly enhanced performance over more conventional modes. It will have the capability to use other modes including CW and SSB if conditions warrant. The callsign used will be **VC1T**.

Members of the expedition include Fred Archibald VE1FA, Roger Sturtevant VE1SKY, Helen Archibald VA1YL, Rich Pieniaszek VA1CHP, and Al Penney VO1NO.

Details on the expedition can be found on the team's website www.brendanquest.org. Real-time information on operating modes and schedules will be posted during the expedition on the team's web site, the ON4KST site and the G4CQM Shoutbox. Facebook users are also welcome to join the group's page "Brendan Quest 2M meter Trans-Atlantic Attempt 2014".



Brendanquest Video at IRTS AGM 2014

Radio Waves again from Malin Head

101 years from the last transmission made there

Peter Homer EI4JR



Photograph Taken in January 1902

On the 26th April 2014 it was International Marconi Day (Marconi's Birthday). The Carndonagh Amateur Radio Club celebrated this by setting up an amateur radio station at Malin Head next to Banbas Tower which was the original place used from January 1902 and operated by the Marconi Marine Company on behalf of Lloyds with the callsign "MH". Located at the northernmost tip of Ireland, this station was ideally positioned to communicate with shipping coming across the Atlantic or from northern waters. The operations at the head stopped in 1913 where the Coast guard station is operating to this day.

It was just over 101 years since the last transmission was made from the Wireless Transmission station that was housed in second floor at Banbas Tower - as it's now known locally.

Researching Malin Head for the event was done over a year and has caused a bit of a stir as it revealed a massive amount of local history that had been lost or forgotten over the years. We managed to go back in history as far back as 1804, and have copies of the sketches done by the man who designed and built the first structures erected at Malin Head, together with sketches that were done of the tower in 1808. The Napoleonic tower was built in 1805.

We spoke to many visitors to Malin Head from different parts of Ireland and visitors from different



The Club banner

countries who were holidaying regarding the history of the signalling and communications at Malin Head from 1804 to 1913, and they were amazed that there was so much history in such a small place. We had on display many pictures and drawings and the history in a booklet which helped explain things.

In a 9-hour period the Malin Head Marconi celebration station was operated, contact was made with 155 radio stations worldwide exchanging greeting, telling them about what went on at Malin Head and giving signal reports. Tasmania in Australia was the furthest station that we talked to which was 17,666km (10,977 Miles) away from us.



On the previous page is the replica of the Marconi Spark Gap Transmitter and the vintage Morse key that was used in the early days when the station was operated from Malin Head. These were on display at the Marconi event.

The vehicle that was used as the radio operations room for the day was fitted out with the radio equipment. The mobile tower was only up at a height of 25 feet which was sufficiently high enough to attach the centre of the simple dipole antenna. The two ends of the antenna were attached to the old concrete lookout post building and to Banbas Tower.



Tommy Browne EI2HXB (left) from Malin Head and Martin Rabbett G10IOT from Derry operating the radio that was used to communicate to other licensed radio amateurs around the world during the Marconi Day.



It got very busy in the afternoon with visitors



Caffè Banba Mobile unit was at the Head every day during the summer with lovely cakes and hot tea and coffee.



Caffè Banba made a special cake to celebrate the occasion. The Morse reads "Welcome to Banbas Crown".



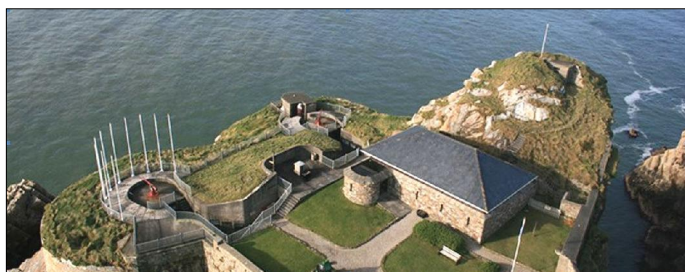


Some of the pictures, Replica Marconi Spark Gap Transmitter and Morse Key on display.

We have already had emails from amateurs outside Ireland who spoke to or heard us on the radio and when visiting Ireland this year will visit Malin Head as part of their holiday.

Again next year we will be celebrating Marconi's birthday from Malin Head as we have done this year.

Our next event is "Museums On The Air" 14-15 & 21-22 June 2014. This is over two weekends.



The Carndonagh Amateur Radio Club has been invited to Fort Dunree Military Museum where we will be operating from.

The intention of the event is to set up amateur radio special-event stations at as many museums as possible throughout the whole of the world. Making contact with other Museums and the many radio hams worldwide.

The choice of museum is also left very much up to the Radio Clubs involved, however the aim is for the largest and/or most unusual site we can find. The museums taking part over the years have included ships, castles, air museums, Napoleonic forts, pumping stations, wireless museums, racing

museums and many others. For the purposes of the event, the word 'museum' is loosely interpreted. There really is no shortage of venues in which such an event can be staged, no matter where in the world you might live.

During the first IMW in 2002 over 80 museums from all over the world took part. The museums varied from tiny local village museums manned by a single lone operator, to some of the world's most prestigious ones. These were accompanied by a great number of military museum sites, such as HMS Belfast in London, the Battleship New Jersey in the US, RAF museums as well as very many non-military.

The event has proven itself to be extremely popular and well supported special event particularly amongst the UK and Ireland radio amateur population. It also went down very well at the museums which were used as the venues for the event, and invitations have again been extended for the coming June. It has shown itself to be a tremendous public relations exercise, as well as all of us having lots of fun over the IMW weekends. Part of the intention for this event is to present modern amateur radio to members of the public.

What better place to do this than in the very public and well visited areas of the many museums which can be found in most parts of the world?

Peter Homer EI4JR peter@ei4jr.com

www.irts.ie www.malinhead.net

Bangor and District Amateur Radio Society

Summer Rally

Donaghadee Community Centre

Donaghadee

County Down

BT21 0HE

Saturday

5th July 2014

Admission £3.00

Doors Open 1130

www.bdars.com/rally



IARU Matters

Member-Societies Ratify Officer Nominations

On 8 May 2014, the IARU member-societies completed voting on proposals nominating Timothy S. Ellam, VE6SH/G4HUA and Ole Garpestad, LA2RR as IARU President and Vice President, respectively, for the five-year term beginning 9 May 2014. With 51 affirmative votes required for adoption, there were 67 affirmative votes for Mr. Ellam and 67 for Mr. Garpestad.

Mr. Ellam served as IARU Vice President from 2004 until 2009 at which time he was first elected as IARU President in 2009 and began a five-year term on 9 May 2009. Mr. Garpestad was first elected as IARU Vice President in 2009 at the same time Mr. Ellam became President.

Upon his re-election, Mr. Ellam said: "I am very honoured to have been elected as President of IARU for another term and grateful for the support from the Administrative Council and our member-societies. I am excited about the future of the Amateur Radio Services and look forward to working with the IARU team to meet the challenges ahead and to build on the work we have undertaken in the last term."

"Congratulations to the rest of the officer team. Ole Garpestad for his re-election as Vice President and Rod Stafford for his continued appointment as Secretary. I am very pleased to continue working with Ole and Rod as we move towards the next World Radiocommunication Conference in 2015."

Mr. Garpestad stated: "I am honoured to have been elected as Vice President of IARU for another term. I look forward to the continuing good cooperation with the other officers as well as with the IARU Administrative Council to improve and defend our radio amateur privileges and our allocated spectrum. I am also looking forward to work with all our IARU member societies to ensure a steady flow of new members, especially young people, to our hobby."

Rod Stafford, W6ROD, continues to serve as IARU Secretary. The IARU Secretary is appointed by the American Radio Relay League in its capacity as the IARU International Secretariat.

Dundalk Amateur Radio Society

www.ei7dar.com

The AGM of Dundalk Amateur Radio Society was held at the club premises, Larkin House, 113 Castletown Road, Dundalk on Wednesday May 7th 2014.

The following were elected as officers for the coming year:

Chairman:	Brian EI8EJB
Secretary:	Hugh EI9KF
Treasurer:	Jim EI2HJB
PRO:	Thos EI2JD

IRTS sends Greetings to ARRL on its Centennial



The ARRL was founded on 18th May 1914 by Hiram Percy Maxim. ARRL (American Radio Relay League) is the national association for Amateur Radio in the US. Its objects are "To promote and advance the art, science and enjoyment of Amateur Radio".

Today, with more than 161,000 members, ARRL is the largest organisation of radio amateurs in the world. ARRL's mission is based on five pillars: Public Service, Advocacy, Education Technology, and Membership.

IRTS has commissioned a Dublin Crystal Plate as a token of our friendship and co-operation, and to mark our sister Society's auspicious occasion.

South Eastern Amateur Radio Group

www.searg.com

The 2014 AGM of the South Eastern Amateur Radio Group took place in the Roanmore Social and Sports Centre, Cleaboy Road, Waterford.

The following members were elected to the Committee.

Chairman:	Dennis EI2HSB
Vice-Chairman:	John EI3HQB
Secretary:	David EI6GVB
Treasurer:	Mark EI7IS
PRO:	Sean EI2HZB
Club Officer 1:	John EI7IG
Club Officer 2:	David EI3HTB
Club Officer 3:	John EI8JA

Shannon Basin Radio Club

<http://www.shannonbasinradioclub.com>

The Shannon Basin Radio Club recently held its AGM which was well attended with some new members joining.

The Committee would like to thank the outgoing officers for their work throughout the year.

The following officers were elected:

Chairperson:	Pat EI9HX
Secretary:	Brian EI8IU
Treasurer:	Fergus EI6IB
PRO:	Anthony EI6GGB
QSL Manager:	Anthony EI6GGB
Contest Manager:	Mark EI6JK

40 Metres Counties Contest

In addition to three Field Day contests for HF/CW, VHF/UHF and HF/SSB respectively, the society sponsors four Counties Contests every year, two on HF (80 metres) and two on VHF (2 metres). The 32 EI and GI counties are multipliers, and the contest duration is three hours on HF, and just two hours for the VHF contests. The emphasis on local contacts and the short duration of these events have helped to attract operators who would not normally enter radio contests.

In the light of success of the 40 metre radio news, given the number of call-in stations to that service, it was decided to add a 40 metres counties contest to the calendar.

The first 40 metres EI/GI counties contest was held on Sunday 18th May, from 12:00 to 15:00 UTC. Band conditions were favourable, with good local propagation, especially during the second half of the contest. Quite a few club stations were on the air. Shannon Basin Radio Club, Avondhu Radio Club, Kerry Amateur Radio Group, Mayo Radio Experimenters Network and Tipperary Amateur Radio Group, all operating from portable locations; South Dublin Radio Club was also on the air, from a fixed location.

While activity in the SSB part of the band was reasonable for most of the time, just a handful of stations ventured into the CW segment. Early reports suggest that at least 27 counties were active during the contest. A number of G and GW stations also participated.



Team SDR: Tom EI7HT, Jim EI4HH, Dan EI9FHB, Martin EI9KG, Brendan EI3GV, Joe EI7GY



Team SDR on the air: Martin EI9KG, Tom EI7HT

SBRC in 40m Counties Contest

Shannon Basin Radio Club operated from the grounds of Garbally College (thanks to the College for letting the Club use the grounds) in Ballinasloe, Co. Galway.

The Zepp antenna was strung between two trees and fed from an Icom IC7400 located in the luxurious surroundings of Tony's (EI3HA) camper van where tea and other refreshments were plentiful. The club operated in both SSB and CW although CW QSOs were sadly few and far between.



2m Counties Contest

The two metre band came alive for a few hours on Easter Monday for the two metres counties contest. Band conditions were quite variable, with signals rising and falling very rapidly over short periods for the longer distance QSOs. The good weather made it easier for the portable stations, especially those on high ground: those included Shannon Basin Radio Club, who were on Cairn Hill Co. Longford, David EI7GEB who was on Djouce Mountain Co. Wicklow and Joe EI7GY in Co. Laois on the Slieve Blooms. Both David and Joe were activating SOTA summits: David reports a summit-to-summit contact with Northern Spain - though admittedly that was on 15 metres!



Joe Ryan EI7GY on Arderin Co Laois

The counties contest is a popular event for clubs; as well as Shannon Basin Radio Club, the following were heard, Kerry Amateur Radio Group, Tipperary Amateur Radio Group, South Eastern Amateur Radio Group and Mayo Radio Experimenters Network.

Hurdy Gurdy Museum installs new dual-band antenna

Ye Olde Hurdy Gurdy Museum of Vintage Radio is located in the Martello Tower overlooking Howth Harbour. If you are contemplating a visit, the entrance is opposite the Abbey Tavern, Abbey Street, Howth. The museum is open from 11am to 4pm seven days a week during the summer months. More information can be obtained from Pat Herbert on 086 8154189.

Recently the Museum installed a new dual-band VHF antenna on the roof of the museum. Among those involved were Mike EI2DJ, Nick EI7GOB, Tony EI5EM.



Mike EI2DJ and Nick EI7GOB attaching the radials

AGM 2014

The Galway Bay Hotel was delighted to host the IRTS weekend and gave everyone their full attention and co-operation. The size of the Trade Show allowed sufficient room to walk around in comfort and there were no "white empty spaces" in the trading area. It was filled to capacity.

The TLC charity did very well at the dinner and also at the Trade Show on the Sunday. They departed with a total of 500 Euro between the draw at the AGM dinner and the sale of Bears on Sunday. The Galway VHF Group would like to thank the IRTS Committee for allowing the draw for this worthy cause at the dinner. All prizes were donated by the Galway VHF Group with the exception of "Large Teddy".

The TLC Charity do tremendous work in providing Teddy Bears to children whilst attending AE departments in hospitals.

The proceeds from the AGM weekend will be put to the completion of three projects in Galway City and County; these being:

1. Upgrading the coverage of Galway VHF existing APRS system with an extra Digipeater.
2. The completion of the 4m Gateway.
3. The completion and placement of a 70cm repeater in County Galway which will have a relatively large coverage area spanning most of County Galway.

Each member of the Galway VHF Group has put a lot of time and effort in the work performed on these projects.

The entire event was a huge success. Congratulations to the Galway VHF Group.

Contest Calendar

All times UTC

June 2014

07-08	Sat 1500 – Sun 1500
21-22	Sat 0000 – Sun 2359
22	Sun 1400 – Sun 1700
28-29	Sat 1200 – Sun 1200

IRTS CW Field Day
All Asian DX Contest
IRTS 80m Counties Contest
The King of Spain Contest

CW	RST + Serial Number
CW	RST + Age
CW/SSB	RST + Serial + County
SSB	RST + Serial Number

July 2014

05-06	Sat 1100 – Sun 1059
05-06	Sat 1400 – Sun 1400
12-13	Sat 1200 – Sun 1200
19-20	Sat 1800 – Sun 2100
26-27	Sat 1200 – Sun 1200

DL-DX RTTY Contest
IRTS VHF/UHF Field Day
IARU HF Championship
CQ WW VHF Contest
IOTA Contest

RTTY	RST + Serial Number
CW/FM/SSB	RST + Serial + Locator
CW/SSB	RST + ITU Zone
CW/SSB	4-character Grid square
CW/SSB	RST + Serial + IOTA Ref.

August 2014

02	Sat 1200 – Sat 2359
09-10	Sat 0000 – Sun 2359
16-17	Sat 0800 – Sun 0800
24	Sun 1300 – Sun 1500
30-31	Sat 1200 – Sun 1159
30-31	Sat 1200 – Sun 1200

EU HF Championship	CW/SSB	RS(T) + 2-digit number
(the last two digits of the year of operator's first ever official amateur radio licence)		
Worked All Europe DX	CW	RS(T) + Serial Number
RDA Contest	CW/SSB	RS(T) + Serial Number
IRTS 2m Counties Autumn	FM/SSB	RS + Serial + County
SCC RTTY Championship	RTTY	RS(T) + 4-digit number
(year of operator's first ever official amateur radio licence)		
YO DX HF Contest	CW/SSB	RS(T) + Serial Number

Irish Radio Transmitters Society
Treasurer's report for the year to 31st December 2013 to the Annual General Meeting at the Galway Bay Hotel Sunday 23rd March 2014

We have pleasure in presenting the Accounts for the year 2013 for approval.

The Income and Expenditure account shows a surplus of €2,056 at year-end. While this is a substantial increase on the surplus for 2013 it was almost totally as a result of a reduction in the printing and distribution costs for Echo Ireland.

The Subscription income shows an increase over 2012. This does not indicate an increase in membership over last year. Subscription income is shown as a gross figure, with associated costs such as Paypal fees, currency conversion etc, shown separately in the accounts. A direct comparison with the 2012 accounts would therefore show subscription income less Paypal fees at €22,922, a reduction of €374. Paypal provides an efficient method for paying subscriptions and its use by members is increasing. It is also cost effective in reducing the requirement for repeated postal reminders..

As always, we have seen again a small increase in Postage costs. It is hoped this will show a reduction in the current year as more members opt for payment through Paypal. QSL incoming costs show an increase, almost certainly as a result of the large number of cards generated by EI80IRTS and EI13CLAN. This increase is more than offset by the income generated by EI13CLAN. Most other costs are broadly in line with the previous year.

In mid year the accounts were changed from manual book-keeping to electronic format. This has improved the ability to produce timely reports and to watch trends in costs. As part of this process members have been encouraged to use electronic fund transfers where possible, further reducing postal costs and bank charges. The EI13CLAN income was generated from direct QSL contributions and payments for Certificates and is a one-off. It is expected that some further small income will be generated through 2014, after which this item will no longer appear in the accounts.

The surplus of income over expenditure is almost totally generated through the reduction in issues of Echo Ireland from 5 issues in 2012 to 4 issues in 2013. Each issue costs approximately €2600 to print and distribute, so a 5th issue in 2013 would have wiped out the surplus for the year. However the ILP write-off will not have any impact on future years, leaving the probability that five issues of Echo Ireland in 2014 would leave the Society with a small surplus by year-end. Any reduction in membership would erode that surplus and leave the Society once again in deficit. Whilst we have a surplus of €46,707 in the general reserve fund it would not be prudent to erode this on a year by year basis as membership declines, and as more existing members qualify for lower concessionary fees. This is an issue that deserves debate and serious consideration by the committee in the coming year. The Society had been issued with a number of Irish Life and Permanent shares some years ago. These were a bonus issue at the time, and were issued at no cost to the Society. With the recent problems in the banking sector these shares became virtually worthless. Whilst they are still retained by the Society it was considered prudent to write off their value to zero. This is reflected in the accounts as a loss. Should these shares regain value in the future, that value can then be taken back in to the accounts.

Thanks again to our auditors Brendan de hÓra EI3GV and to Brendan Lynch EI6GA who cast a forensic eye on the accounts prior to approval and audit.

Seán Donelan EI4GK

Dave O'Connor EI6AL

Joint Treasurers

Footnote:

I think it is appropriate at Year End to thank Sean EI4GK on behalf of all the members for the many years he has put in preparing previous year end accounts, and my personal thanks for the meticulous documentation handed over by Sean – it made the transfer to electronic format a very straightforward project.

Dave EI6AL

Balance Sheet as at 31st December 2013

	2013	2014
Fixed Assets		
Equipment	0	0
Prize Bonds	89	89
Irish Life & Permanent Shares	754	0
Current Assets		
Stock for Re-sale	895	716
Cash on Deposit	40,645	46,245
Cash in Bank	11865	10,562
Total Assets	53,405	57,568
Total Liabilities	0	0
Surplus Assets over Liabilities	54,248	57,568
Represented by		
General Reserve	45,405	46,707
Call Book Reserve	232	1,000
IARU Conference Reserve	3,622	4,872
John O'Riordan (EI6IU) Fund	4,989	4,989
	54,248	57,568

Signed: Dave O'Connor EI6AL

Seán Donelan EI4GK Joint Hon. Treasurers

Irish Radio Transmitters Society

Income and Expenditure Account for the Year to 31st December 2013

Income €	2012	2013
Subscriptions	23,296	23,375
Donations	142	70
EI6IJ Fund	0	0
Advertising	683	400
Book/CD Rom Sales	-296	-227
Interest	858	917
Theory & Morse Test	1,352	1,305
EI13CLAN	0	683
Other Income	0	0
Total Income €	26,035	26,523
Expenditure €		
Newsletter Printing	7,850	6,278
Newsletter Postage/Delivery	5,369	4,187
Callbook (accrual)	768	768
Postage & Telephone	830	1,053
QSL Outgoing	900	600
QSL Incoming	1,500	1,950
Paypal Commissions	0	453
Insurance	681	681
Committee Meetings (Room hire)	1,276	955
Stationery & Admin.	456	353
AGM Costs	205	455
IARU Dues	1,088	1,061
Licence Fees	147	200
IARU Conference Reserve	1,250	1,250
Bank Charges	713	643
Trophies etc.	610	1,048
Website Costs	325	329
Donations	0	100
Writedowns	0	754
ComReg	290	309
EI6IJ Fund	0	0
Exceptional Items	843	430
YOTA	633	602
Miscellaneous Costs	80	10
Total Expenditure €	25,814	24,468
Defecit for Year €	(221)	2,056

Notes on, and forming part of the Accounts for the year ended 31st December 2013.

Income

Subscriptions and Income received during the year were treated as cash received and credited to the income and expenditure account. No provision was made for subscriptions in arrears. No provision was made for treating subscriptions falling after 31st December as prepayments.

General Reserve

Balance as at 1st January 2013	€45,405
Surplus at 31st December 2013	<u>€ 2,056</u>
Sub Total	€47,461
Less ILP Share write-off	<u>€ 754</u>
General Reserve carried forward	€46,707

IARU Conference Reserve

Balance at 1st January 2013	€ 3,622
Transferred to reserve	<u>€ 1,250</u>
Total reserve 31st Dec 2013	€ 4,872

Callbook Reserve

Balance at 1st January 2013	€ 232
Transferred to reserve	<u>€ 768</u>
Total reserve 31st Dec 2013	€ 1,000

Shares - Irish Life and Permanent

The shares held by the Society are currently worth approximately €20. These shares were originally acquired at no cost to the Society. It was therefore considered prudent to no longer reflect these shares as an asset, and they have been written down to zero value. They are still retained by the Society and in the unlikely event that they achieve some value in the future they can be re-entered to the balance sheet at the appropriate value.

Cash on Deposit

Balance on 1st Jan 2013	€40,645
Balance on 31st Dec	€46,751

The increase in the total on deposit reflects the transfer of €5000 from the Society bank a/c in 2013, the same amount having been transferred from the deposit account to the Society bank a/c in late 2012. There was also interest earned in 2013.

Auditors Report for year ended December 31st 2013

We, the undersigned, acting as Honorary Auditors of the Irish Radio Transmitters Society, have compared the foregoing Income and Expenditure Account, Balance Sheet and Notes thereon, with the books and vouchers of the Society and certify that they are correct and in accordance with them.

Signed:

Brendan M. de hÓra EI3GV

Brendan Lynch EI6GA

18th February 2014



Committee Report to the 82nd Annual General Meeting of the Irish Radio Transmitters Society Galway Bay Hotel 23 March 2014

Committee Meetings

Seven Committee meetings were held during the year.

Membership

In 2013 our membership numbers fell by 30 to 919. we had a good inflow of new members – there were 59 new members (or re-joiners) during the year – this inflow was more than offset by the number of members not renewing; also eight of our members became silent keys during the year. We spoke to many of those who decided not to renew: the reasons given for the decision not to renew are varied, with quite a few indicating that they given up amateur radio.

COMREG

The Commission for Communications Regulation (ComReg) is the statutory authority responsible for all licensing functions (other than those relating to Television) under the relevant legislation. Regular contact is maintained with ComReg by the Society. At least one meeting is held annually with representatives of ComReg to discuss matters concerning amateur radio. A good working relationship exists between the Society and the Licensing and Frequency Management sections of the Commission.

Developments: Three issues that had been pursued by the Society came to fruition in January 2013: the release of the new band at 472 to 479kHz, the allocation of three further 3 kHz channels in the 5MHz band and an increase in power to 400 watts on the 10MHz band.

Radio Frequency Plan for Ireland: An updated Radio Frequency Plan for Ireland was published by ComReg on their website on 10 December 2013. There were some small errors in the plan so far as the amateur service in Ireland is concerned. ComReg were made aware of these and we have been informed that they will be corrected before the printed version is produced. The plan incorporates footnote EU17 which the Society had been seeking inclusion (*"EU17 In the sub-bands 3400-3410 MHz, 5660-5670 MHz, 10.36-10.37 GHz, 10.36-10.46 GHz the amateur service operates on a secondary basis. In making arrangements for other services CEPT administrations are required wherever possible to maintain these sub-bands in such a way as to facilitate the reception of amateur signals with minimal flux densities."*).

Spectrum Strategy: We expect that the ComReg Spectrum Strategy document will be published within the next three months. As usual the Society will make a written submission on this document and seek a meeting on issues we raise as appropriate.

Five Yearly Notifications: Under Regulation 7. (1) (i) of the Wireless Telegraphy (Amateur Station Licence) Regulations 2009, licensees are required, no later than the fifth anniversary of the issue of a licence, to make a return to ComReg to identify whether the information contained in the Licence and the Licensee's details are correct. The first such notifications will be due in July 2014. The Society has discussed this matter with ComReg and it is intended to have an on-line system in place before notifications become due.

Automatic Station Coordination Group

Under a long standing arrangement with ComReg, requests for automatic stations are referred through the Society to this group which operates by email and comprises most of the repeater/beacon keepers in the country. The Committee wishes to record its thanks to them for their co-operation and to John McCarthy EI8JA who coordinates the work of the group. It is of benefit to the amateur community that there is a system of consultation on applications for automatic stations.

The Committee takes this opportunity to thank the officials in ComReg for their cooperation with the Society during the year.

International Amateur Radio Union

At international level, National Societies throughout the world work together for the overall good of Amateur Radio under the auspices of a representative democracy, the International Amateur Radio Union – IARU. It is through the work of the IARU that radio amateurs by devising agreed objectives and developing unified strategies have achieved the various improvements in frequency allocations at WRCs over the years - the most recent being the new MF band at WRC-12 of 472-479kHz. A small part of each member's annual subscription goes to help fund the work of the IARU. All who have the best interests of amateur radio at heart should be members of their National Society and contribute to and support the work of the IARU. Being a paid-up member of your national Society is the only way you can give practical support to the work of the Union and so help to secure the future of amateur radio. Like any other Union, the IARU

works for the good of its members – the radio amateurs of the world

For many years now the Society had maintained a designated fund to allow the IRTS to be represented by two delegates at the three yearly Conferences of Region 1 IARU and a small part of the subscription income of the society is lodged to this fund each year. The Society will be represented at the IARU Region 1 Conference in Varna -Albena, Bulgaria on 21-27 September 2014.

Central Archive: In the latter half of 2013 a Region 1 Central Archive was established in Vienna under a curator Wolf Harranth OE1WHC. Physical and computer storage is available and the Society is cooperating in the work of the archive.

Region 1 Technical Experts/Consultants:

Towards the end of 2013 a letter was received from IARU Region 1 seeking help in identifying suitable people who could assist in the representational/technical role of the Region. The Society nominated Dave Court EI3IO who has extensive experience in the Radio Regulatory area and Brendan Minish EI6IZ who is experienced in EMC matters and is an invited member of the RSGB EMC Committee.

Officer Ratification: The society voted in favour of the ratification of Tim Ellam VE6SH and Ole Garpestad LA2RR as President and Vice President respectively of IARU International for the next five years.

WRC-15: Representatives of IARU are attending all appropriate meetings to seek to secure support for a new amateur band at 5MHz at the World Radio Conference 2015. The Society has had preliminary discussions on this matter with ComReg. It will be raised with the Department of Communications Energy and natural Resources as the final decision on Ireland's position on the issue is a matter for that Department.

CEPT

A meeting of the CEPT Working Group on Frequency Management (WGFM) was held in Dublin on 26/27 November. The meeting was a Civil/military meeting and was attended by Hans PB2T, President IARU Region 1 and Panayot LZ1US IARU Region 1 Executive Committee. On 27 September Seán EI7CD as IRTS/IARU Liaison attended the meeting to hear a presentation by a representative of NATO on WRC-15. So far as the possibility of a

new amateur band at 5MHz is concerned, the presentation revealed nothing. However, I was told informally that the NATO position on the issue was gradually softening. Hans PB2T gave an excellent presentation on amateur radio, the IARU and the need for a new amateur band in the region of 5 MHz.

A group of Irish military personnel from the Communications and Information Services attended the meeting as observers. Some useful contacts were made with them and they were given a paper which gave details of IRTS, IARU, the background to the present 5MHz allocations, the proposal for a new band at 5MHz arising from Agenda Item 1.4 of WRC-15 and the reasons for it. The paper also included details of the current 5MHz allocations here, as well as the allocations in the UK effective since 1 January 2013 and the worldwide allocations. The Society will pursue with the military authorities, as the primary user, the question of a new band at 5MHz as well as the alignment of allocations at 5MHz here with those of the UK.

Amateur Station Licence Examination

Examinations: The current agreement under which IRTS is responsible for setting, organising and correcting this examination runs until 2016. Since the last AGM two examinations were held in July and October 2013 and a total of thirty eight candidates sat these examinations. Since IRTS took over responsibility for administering the examination nine years ago, eighteen examinations have been held and 329 candidates (including repeats) have sat these examinations and 200 have gained the HAREC qualification.

Course Guide: For the past eight years the Society has made available a CD-based Course Guide to candidates preparing for the Amateur Station Licence Examination. The format of the material on this CD meant that it required a PC with a CD drive and the Microsoft Windows operating system. Recognising that tablets and other devices with different operating systems are increasingly being used for browsing, the Society has now converted the CD material to a format accessible by any modern browser and made it available on the IRTS website. The course guide is at www.irts.ie/course and a zip file of the complete course is available for download at www.irts.ie/downloads.

Radio News

The Radio News service is running well at present with indications of increasing interest in the two HF Sunday news transmissions. The Society is still seeking HF newsreaders as this service at present depends on two newsreaders. The News is also broadcast by clubs on VHF from various locations throughout the country mainly on Monday and Tuesday evenings. We wish to particularly thank Aidan Noone

EI7JC who continues to produce interesting and informative news scripts week in week out. Finally we pay tribute to the dedication and commitment of the many newsreaders who give of their time to bring us the Radio News Service throughout the year.

Awards

The Society is called on each year to validate a small number of applications by members for awards granted by other IARU Societies.

The Society's trophies, which are awarded for contests, construction as well as for services to the Society or to Amateur Radio, will be presented in the course of the AGM.

IRTS Youth

The third Youngsters On the Air took place in Tartu Estonia from 5 - 12 August 2013. About 85 participants from the following countries attended: Belgium, Bulgaria, Croatia, Estonia, Finland, Ireland, Italy, Latvia, Lithuania, The Netherlands, Poland, Romania, Russia, Slovenia and Sweden. The youngsters followed a program which included several activities such as contesting, ARDF, electronic kit building, robotics, satellites and Estcube demonstration, visiting an observatory, intercultural evening representing their home countries and antenna building. The youngsters had a great week, new friends were made and arising out of that, youngsters and team leaders are planning new meetings and other youth activities in the future. As team leader, it was my pleasure to accompany the Irish team consisting of Caoimhe McNamara EI1650 (Daughter of EI4GXB) Lisa Cummins EI9GSB Co-team leader, Jordan Cummins SWL (Son of EI9GSB) and Kelsey Aspell SWL (Daughter of EI3HGB). Since returning from Estonia, Jordan Cummins has successfully passed the Amateur Station License Examination and his callsign is EI4HLB.

AREN

Members of Dundalk and Skerries radio clubs took advantage of the mild winter to get some outdoor training in at the end of January.

February and March saw the Galway VHF Group active for two completely different activities; one was a cycle event around Loughrea, Co. Galway. The other was the annual Galway "Head of the River event".

April saw a return to Lough Derg House in Dromineer. The proprietor, Declan EI2GE, took great care of everyone. Amateur Radio operators came from all parts of the country. The weekend included diverse topics such as a review of: A strategic overview document, common frequencies, a brief introduction to the Major Emergency Management Framework and an introduction to NBEMS/Fldigi for digital communications purposes.

Traditionally there has been a strong social aspect to the weekend which continued this year. April also had the members from Galway out keeping an eye on some hardy folks participating in the "Connemara Ultra Marathon". As could be expected in this type of event, there was plenty of communications traffic generated by medical assistance requests for minor injuries, and lifts for those who had bitten off more than they could handle.

April also saw technical assistance being given to Donegal Mountain Rescue team with regards to mobile radio and antenna installation on a new team vehicle.

The Galway VHF group were out in June for the Galway Regatta, the Croi Cycle and in July for the Castlebar 4 Day Walking Festival. The first day of the festival was quite busy communications wise with lots of walkers finding themselves out of their depth and needing assistance to return to base.

July saw the North East AREN group out assisting with the Clogherhead 10k run. This was building on the work done in 2012 in building relationships with the organisers.

In August operators from the South East and Dublin once again assisted with the Sean Kelly tour. AREN's role was to support Civil Defence, who were the lead agency for the event. Several thousand cyclists participated on the Sunday covering an area of approximately 1500 square kilometres. As the weather was much kinder to the cyclists this year, there were far less calls for medical assistance. AREN's principle role was to establish communications between the Emergency Operations Centre and Order of Malta who were at a remote, hilly part of the course and provide APRS tracking of the sweep vehicle on each of the three routes.

December saw the North East group back in action for Drogheda's "Santa Run". The organisers were very impressed with the capability, professionalism and appearance of the group.

During the year various donated items of equipment were distributed out to members to be used for public service events.

Early in the year Conor, EI4JN was requested to participate in a Technical Communications Sub-group; the role of the group was to perform an analysis of the existing Voluntary Emergency Services (VES) communications capabilities and to propose proposed strategies for interoperability in the Southern VES region. This group is currently in the process of completing its work. It also shows how AREN can have influence in more than just a 'communications' capacity.

Also in December, through EI4JN, AREN received a large donation of old laptops. These are currently being checked out

before being distributed to AREN groups throughout Ireland. Indeed there were many donations from various individuals throughout the year, all these are very much appreciated as we try and build capacity in the organisation.

Finally, in the past few weeks, Amateur Radio operators in the Limerick area have been directly involved in missing persons search.

Throughout 2013, approximately 700 hours were directly spent by members on AREN activities. This does not include the time spent preparing for events or training. Many thanks to all members for donating their time and expertise to public service.

EMC

During the past 12 months a number of individual members have made contact with the EMC officer with regard to Interference to HF reception.

I am aware of 2 cases that could not be resolved locally and were referred on to Comreg's EMC department. Once case was resolved satisfactorily and the second is ongoing. Generally however EMC issues can be resolved on a local basis through co-operation.

I would appeal to the members to report back on how their EMC issues were resolved, we can all learn from the outcomes of others.

PrEN50561-1:2012 the draft standard for in home powerline networking was ratified by the CENELEC technical board and becomes a published standard in 2014 however this standard does not invalidate the requirements under the EMC directive, it provides a test framework for placing powerline networking devices on the market within the EU.

Devices placed on sale within the EU or imported into the EU must conform to the EMC directive (Directive 2004/108/EC) which has been transposed into Irish law.

Even where a device is shown to be compliant with all applicable standards the EMC directive requires that the supplier or importer of a device has to take action should a device cause undue interference to radio users . As radio amateurs we have the same entitlements to protection as any other licensed radio user or service.

It is important to note that in most cases liability for resolving the issues rests with the manufacturer or the Supplier of the device, not with the owner of the device, this should be borne in mind when dealing with EMC issues.

IARUMS

The IARU Monitoring System(IARUMS) is a worldwide service authorized by the

IARU Administrative Council (AC) through regional coordinators. The objectives of the IARUMS are the identification and initiation of steps leading to the removal from amateur bands of radio signals of non amateur stations causing harmful interference to the amateur and amateur satellite services contrary to International Telecommunication Union (ITU) Radio Regulations. The Region 1 Co-ordinator is DK2OM - Wolfgang Hadel.

Any reports of incursions of non-amateur signals are collected by the individual national IARUMS representative and then passed onto the Region 1 Coordinator to alert other countries who may be able to track down the source of the interference. IARUMS does not deal with problems such as local interference such as plasma TVs and electric welders etc. To date there have been reports of fishing vessels illegally transmitting USB in the CW section of the 80 metre band.

There were only two reports submitted over the last year and these were quickly identified. The most recent was an Over the Horizon Radar emanating from Cyprus with 50 sweeps/sec. This had been reported by a number of countries and the German PTT took bearings and swiftly identified the culprit. There are many other incursions to be found from Russian Taxis on the 10 mere band and these are regularly reported. Some military Spread Spectrum signals are regularly heard as bands open but there is very little that can be done about them. If one is aware of any broadcasts on Amateur bands they should be reported where IARUMS can initiate the process to get them removed. At present it would be most helpful if the illicit transmissions found in the CW end of the 80 metre band could be recorded and passed on to the IRTS IARUMS co-ordinator. Other incursions such as church broadcasts on the Amateur Bands seem to have been eliminated but if any such broadcasts should be encountered please make every effort to report them and establish the source of the transmission. The success of IARUMS is wholly dependent on Shortwave listeners and Amateur stations alike so it is recommended that all are vigilant as early detection of illicit transmissions can result in fast action towards the location and subsequent action to remove them from the amateur bands.

QSL Service

In these days of electronics for all aspects of ham radio, even an electronic QSL card, it is nice to see so many paper QSL cards going through both the incoming and outgoing bureau. The inward QSL bureau is ran by a small and dedicated group of individuals from all over the country.

When the cards arrive to the P O Box, Michael CL, is first to sort out the cards that arrive.

Pat EI2HX picks them a couple of days before the regular IRTS committee meetings and then would distribute them to the sub managers present at the meeting, the sub managers that are unable to attend the meeting are sent their batch of QSL cards in the post days after the meeting, when they get the cards they are sorted and sent to the members. The sub-managers send the cards out to members at least 6 times a year, so you will get your cards as soon as possible. Some members have stated that they "have not received a card in ages", please note that if you use the QSL bureau it could take at least 6 months for a QSL card to get to you for that QSO you had, as when you post the card to the outgoing department it is then sent to that Countries QSL Bureau, on to the sub-manager and finally to the station you worked, and then the reverse applies for his QSL card to get to you. Members are also asked to let their previous sub manager know if they have changed their callsign so we can redirect your cards from your old callsign. It is noticed that QSL cards for contacts for the digital modes have increased.

I would like to thank the dedicated crew of sub managers again for giving up their time in doing this very important task in one of the IRTS's most important jobs, to give you your QSL cards.

The details of your QSL sub manager are, as always, found on page 2 of Echo Ireland.

Publications

Five issues of Echo Ireland were produced and the new colour pages have been warmly welcomed. Many thanks to editor Dave Moore EI4BZ, for the extremely hard work he puts in to ensure Echo Ireland is produced to a very high standard. Many thanks are also due to all the contributors.

Committee Nominations

The following are the Committee's nominations;
President Séamus McCague EI8BP
Vice-President Jim Smith EI4CP

Committee

Ger McNamara	EI4GXB
Jim Holohan	EI4HH
Steve Wright	EI5DD
Paul O'Kane	EI5DI
Paul Barlow	EI5KI
Dave O'Connor	EI6AL
Brendan Minish	EI6IZ
John Ronan	EI7IG
Brian Canning	EI8IU
Ken O'Brien	EI9EL
Lisa Cummins	EI9GSB

Ger McNamara EI4GXB
IRTS Hon. Secretary.

IRTS Technical Panel

The IRTS Technical Panel is a group of volunteers who have expertise in, or experience of, different aspects of amateur radio. Our aim is to help radio amateurs with technical or operational problems.

What types of problems do we handle?

We don't have a definitive list; however, here are some of the issues that we would have some expertise in:-

- Antennas (e.g. best antenna for a given location, matching antennas to rigs)
- Station operation (e.g. TVI, RF in the shack)
- Sourcing components (e.g. "where can I get toroids?")
- IT issues (logging programs, rig interfacing, LoTW uploads)

How do I ask a question?

Send your question to irtstech@irts.ie. Provide as much information as possible, including details of attempts already made to deal with the issue in question.

How do I get an answer?

Your query will be distributed to the members of the Technical Panel, and their responses will be e-mailed to you.

The Future ...

In time we plan to compile a database of questions and answers from our correspondence. This database could be the first port of call in resolving a query.

Who is on the technical panel?

Good question ... maybe you? We always need more volunteers; if you can help, please send your details to irtstech@irts.ie

Jim Holohan EI4HH is the co-ordinator of the Technical Panel.

South Dublin Radio Club EI2SDR

SDR currently meets every Tuesday evening between 8pm and 10pm at the Ballyroan Community Centre on Marian Road, Rathfarnham, Dublin 14. The 15B bus stops nearby and there is also plenty of parking.

Talks on various aspects of amateur radio are regularly held at the club along with practical demonstrations of various subjects such as Amateur Television (ATV), voice communication via satellite using handheld radio and antenna and other radio related topics.

At a recent meeting members assembled a circularly polarised 2m beam antenna suitable for satellite work.

Note the innovative use of a Lidl bicycle stand to hold the device!



Daniel EI9FHB, Tom EI7HT, Mike EI3DY get to grips with antenna assembly.



Dundalk Amateur Radio Society DARS win the EI13CLAN Challenge

Seven Clubs took part in the EI13CLAN Challenge. Victory went to DARS. They were the first to enter the challenge and their score was chased hard but never beaten. A big thanks to all those who took part, it gave the call great exposure. Thanks also, to the many individual operators who worked the call during the year across all bands and modes.

Pictured below being presented with the prize of an Icom IC-756Pro by Dave EI6AL on behalf of IRTS are Tom EI9CJ, Thos EI2JD, Aidan EI7JC, Mark EI6JK, Pat EI2HX, Jim EI2HJB.



Getting Started

Alan EI3HYB

I am writing this short article to share my start up experiences since being granted my licence in July 2013. I also hope to encourage other newly licensed amateurs to contribute to Echo Ireland by sharing their experiences and evolving working conditions. Photos to accompany this article can be viewed on my QRZ page.

What type of Ham operator am I? I am not a Radio Sport fanatic, unlikely to enter contests and don't get too much time on the air. I am fascinated by the effect of the sun on radio propagation conditions; enjoy the technical challenges and what time I do get on the air! Here goes....EI3HYB QRZ?

My interest in amateur radio goes back to my pre-teen years when my father brought me to an amateur radio rally held in Terenure. That visit, along with stories from my father listening to lighthouse communications on his father's SW radio, sparked my interest in building short wave radios. I have to admit in my early teen years I never actually heard a lighthouse keeper in QSO! My short wave listening included more distant stations amid the QSB like VOA, Radio Moscow and BBC world Service. It was in 2012 when a radio problem arose on a work related project I was visiting (high SWR, non-resonant antenna) that rekindled my interest. That very long path of 40 years in the skip zone needed to be fixed!

A rapid bit of research on the internet brought me to the IRTS website, help was at hand. Preparation for the exam was self-study using the IRTS study CD and sample past paper as the core material. My technical background helped a lot. On advice from Seán EI7CD, I also purchased the RSGB publication "Advance!" to support the self-study. I made my licence application in May of 2013 with an exam date set for July 2013. During that study period I purchased two entry-level SDR receivers. First one was a FiFi SDR and then upgraded to a more advanced Bonito Radio Jet SDR receiver.

The shortcomings of my early SWL experiences were now greatly improved with advances in technology and the power of a PC. The receive-only antenna I purchased was a multi-band 40m, 20m and 10m LNR PAR end-fed antenna which is designed for portable operations. This wire antenna was mounted in the attic space of the QTH and orientated in a north south direction. The SDR SWL listening period provided me with the opportunity to become familiar with on-air CQ, CQ DX, CQ Contest exchanges and other incidents of unethical exchanges and deliberate QRM. The loft space end-fed antenna remains operational for band activity scanning with the Bonito Radio Jet SDR receiver.

As the July exam date approached I finalised my operating requirements. These requirements would influence the transceiver and antenna equipment I would eventually purchase. I had 5 main requirements:

1. There would be no dedicated shack at the QTH. I would need a transceiver configuration that could be set up and put away quickly.



2. An antenna solution would have to be identified suitable for a typical suburban semi-detached environment with limited back garden space.
3. Equipment footprint would have to be compact and portable as I would like it to travel with me.
4. Operational bands would include phone on 2m, 70cm and HF 20m and 40m bands.
5. Costs need to be managed.

Where as equipment was a relatively easy choice with lots of off-the-shelf rigs available both new and second hand the biggest challenge was the HF antenna solution and maximum operating power.

Following a successful performance in the exam I was issued with a call sign EI3HYB. The first transceiver I purchased was a Baofeng UV5R 5 watt dual-band UHF /VHF handheld. This was a low-cost entry-level solution to the local repeaters, EI7KPR and EI2KPR. I improved reception by mounting a Discone antenna in the attic space pending finalisation of the external antenna plan. The Discone was purchased at the Mayo Radio Experimenters rally from South East Communications. This was now going to be my antenna solution for access to the local EI7TRR and EI2KPR repeaters and an opportunity to join a Wednesday evening 70cm net as part of my first venture on air.

My first QSO was with EI2DJ, Michael on the 2nd August 2013, cannot remember what was discussed, the excitement of my making a first licensed radio contact and trying to remember his call sign was unnerving but it was just great to be finally on air!

I used the repeater access to develop my operating skills (always room for improvement!) on air and to seek technical advice on antennas and antenna suitability for limited space suburban environment and HF rigs. The 70cm net on a Wednesday night in question included (9HZ, 6FZ, 2DJ, 5DS, 7FE. EI6FZ, Dermot, offered me the loan of a G5RV junior which he kindly dropped around to the QTH. A Yaesu FT817 5 watts was then purchased with internal battery pack, LDG 817 auto tuner, Collins SSB receive filter, BHI DSP fitted and a Watson cross-needle SWR meter. This choice of rig was made based on requirements 1, 3 and 4.

With the dipole on hand I temporarily mounted it in the loft space and connected my HF set up comprising of the compact 5W FT817, LDG FT817 auto tuner and Watson SWR cross-

needle meter. Reception with the tuned antenna was better in comparison to the end-fed antenna hooked up to the Bonito receiver. On the 11th October I made my first QRP QSO with S5IJS, Jaka in Slovenia, with a signal report of 5/5 which included a few overs.

Over the next few months while the hardware for G5RV (Junior) external mounting solution was being assembled a lot of good QRP QSOs were made on both the 20m and 40m with 5 watts. The LDG 817 auto tuner does an impressive job of tuning up the G5RV on 40m also. The BHI DSP also does a good job of removing coherent background noise improving the overall quality of the audio output of the FT-817 – definitely a worthwhile investment. QSOs included UA1AFT, 5/5, Vasily in St Petersburg, Russia; LN2T, 5/7 Trondheim Norway; HA2EBE, 5/5, Jani Hungary. During this period no transatlantic QSOs with East Coast America were made though plenty heard!

By December 2013 the limitation of the low power output of FT817 was now appreciated. With 5 watts one's reach was very much dependent on having good ionospheric conditions. At this point a decision was made to invest in the FT-897D. This would provide a very flexible and portable rig with a decent 100w that would extend the QSO reach, improve the signal reports and assist in competing in the pileups.

The FT-897D rig was not ordered until late January 2014 but a trip to the USA in December 2013 provided the opportunity to purchase several accessories including; LDG 897 Plus auto tuner, LDG FTL meter and the integrated Yaesu FP30 mains power supply at dollar prices. It was tempting to purchase the rig in the States but did not want to run the gauntlet of airport security and customs! The rig arrived from the UK in early February 2014. To satisfy the portable requirement I also have a 17 ampere-hour sealed lead acid battery that I power the rig from.

The HF antenna was finally mounted in early February 2014 to coincide with the arrival of the new rig. The HF antenna solution comprised of a three 2m sections of galvanised 3.5mm wall thickness pole with a pulley mounted on top. The pole is secured using T and K brackets against the rear wall of back garden. A second single 2m pole was mounted on the apex of the gable end of the house with a T and K bracket set. This gable-end mounted pole provides the mounting for the Discone and a second pulley lower down for raising and lowering the horizontal orientated G5RV junior at an above-ground elevation of 8m. The coax feed to the ladder line is 20m of RG58 with an air choke of 6m wound on a piece of plastic pipe from the ugly balun. A pair of G5RV tensioning springs was added to the antenna suspension system.

Using a flagpole rigging arrangement, the G5RV is raised and lowered with ease and has proved more than useful during the recent high winds for quickly derigging of the wire antenna. The Discone has happily survived the high winds. Its new elevated height of 8m has improved reception and enabled opening of the EI2CRR repeater in Dundalk from Glenageary, Co Dublin which was not previously possible with the loft space temporary mount.

So, how have the results been on HF with the new rig and externally mounted G5RV? Am I happy with my choice and investment in equipment? Any lessons learned? What is next

and what is my families view on all this radio carry on? I would have to say that 100 watts of power yields impressive results. So far QSO as far as Ukraine yield signal reports of 5/9+. I am also very pleased with the portability and rapid setup equipment configuration that I have put in place.

The FT-817 and a multi-band end fed QRP antenna will travel with me to Italy during the summer, the Bonito Radiojet SDR which is about the size of block of cheese travels with me on to far flung place such as Madagascar, and East African countries and the FT-897 has made it to Mayo, and the FT-817 has been on top of Croagh Patrick. In terms of lessons learned I am sure I could have done it a bit cheaper by purchasing on the second-hand market but find that rigs are pretty good at holding their re-sale value. Therefore I opted for paying just below the listed price with a bit of haggling and having the guarantee that comes with new equipment purchases.

Advice for those starting out? Firstly, think long and hard about an antenna solution to suit your QTH and seek advice! Secondly, develop your understating of the impact of space weather conditions on the ionosphere and radio propagation. Two excellent books; An Introduction to Radio Propagation by J.G. Lee. This book is no longer in publication (Babani) but second-hand copies widely available on the internet for a few euro. The second book is Radio Propagation Principles and Practice by Ian Poole and published by RSGB. What's next? Optimise the antenna system by replacing the RG58 with RG213 to hopefully halve losses on the 20m run between the rig and the G5RV. I also plan on replacing the G5RV with a ZS6BKW version of the G5RV junior and returning the antenna on loan to EI6FZ, Dermot.

What do my two kids and my good wife think about this radio business? Well if they had their way it would all be on E-Bay tomorrow!

I will keep you posted on improvement to my operating conditions.

Mid Ulster Amateur Radio Club named RSGB Regional Club of the Year 2014



Phillip Hosey RSGB Region 8 Representative presents members of the Mid Ulster ARC with their Award. Seamus GI4SZW Chairperson, Jimmy GI4ONL Vice Chairperson and Brian MI0TGO



Excerpts from the HX files with Pat Fitzpatrick EI2HX - Excerpt 029

Hello and welcome to Xtract 029 of the HX files.

In this issue of the HX files I would like to take a break from the construction of a couple of items I have currently on the work bench. A couple of parts are needed to complete both of them and I am hoping to get those parts needed at the rally in Germany in June. I do not want to remove any parts from other projects (like I have done before) as these parts would mean a total dismantling of the projects and this time that is not on.

And now, time for something completely different...

So in this issue of Echo Ireland I would like to write about some of my eclectic mix of "collectables". Some of these items were bought because of their "rarity" and some because they are just plain weird; I will leave it up to you to decide which is which.

The first items are a couple of ceramic insulators from (I am told) an aeroplane; these would be placed either end of the plane and the aircrafts wire aerial would pass through them.



Photo 1

In *photo 1* you can see that each has a couple of aluminium rings that attach it to the craft from both sides of the aircrafts skin.



Photo 2

Number 17 set

In *photo 2* you can see one of the radios in the collection, it is a Second World War radio called a "wireless set number 17", there were two versions manufactured, the one I have is the MK2. The MK2's operating frequency is from 44MHz to 61MHz.

Some info for you power hungry hams out there, it could produce around 300 watts, nah only joking, actually its power output is more like +/- 250mW, and with either one of its complement of aerials a distance of some 10 plus miles could be "guaranteed". That was more than enough as you did not want the wrong people earwigging. Its main use was to communicate from the ground support units of Barrage balloons and Anti-Aircraft locations to HQ, and it replaced signalling lamps used in the daylight as well as the night as you did not want the enemy pilots seeing the beam of the lamp at night. As there was a war on, and metal was used for other things, the radio's cabinet was not made from metal but from wood. The manufacture used as much wood as they could in its construction and I often wonder if they tried to make the valves from wood and found that they wooden work!

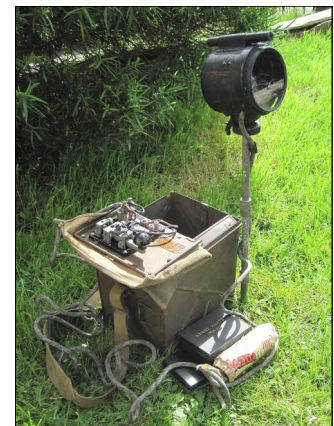
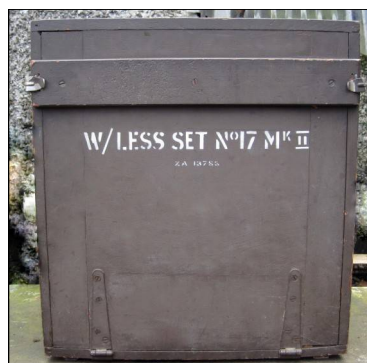


Photo 3

Some details for those of you with no grey hair - it was a ready to go rig and was powered by two 60v dry batteries in series and a 2v 16Ah accumulator. The No 17 used two valves, one each of an AR6 and AR18 type valve. It was mentioned in a radio conversion book that told you how to modify some of the ex-military radios that were available to the radio amateurs, that you should leave the No 17 set alone, as it would cause interference to other radios close by even when it was in the receive position.

The weight of the radio is around 10kg, and its measurements (in inches are), 14½ W, 16 H, and 10 D, it was made on a budget and when the bombs were dropping you did not want to be carrying a big radio as you would have used your hands to keep your hat and trousers on whilst running for shelter.

As mentioned earlier, before the No 17 set there was the signalling lamp like the one in *photo 3*. The case contains the lamp, which had a removable red filter for daytime use; also in the case was a stand made from some small



lengths of tubing that would screw together and then be stuck into the ground. The battery was in the other compartment of the case together with a spares kit including a spare bulb. No space was wasted, as the Morse key was mounted on the inside of one lid and the instructions for its care and use on the other.

The lamp itself has a couple of features, one at the bottom. This is a small screw that when loosened allowed the lamp could to be easily tilted and lined up to the sender's target. On the top of the lamp is a sighting tube - not a telescopic sight but simply a tube with a round hole at the sender/receiver's end and a plus (+) shaped hole at the target end. You may be able to make it out in the photo.



Photo 4

In *photo 4* you can see some microphones, the bottom left one is a WW2 era throat microphone that was used in noisy environments like airplanes. Top left is also a microphone and not a ray gun from Flash Gordon. Top right is a head set from a Marconi marine base radio I think it was called a triple diversity transceiver, and the microphone on the bottom right is from another Army radio.

And finally...

That is it for this issue of Echo Ireland; in a forthcoming newsletter I must mention some of the other military radios and Morse code keys and other bits and pieces in the collection. Perhaps you could send in an article yourself about some of your own collections of the weird and wonderful. 73.
Pat.



Summits On The Air

Followers of the SOTA programme will know that Phil ON4TA is a regular activator of Irish summits. Phil has just finished another visit to Ireland, taking in the society's AGM weekend in Galway and numerous hills in Wicklow, Wexford, Cavan, Longford and Down. Phil's main aim during this visit was to activate some of the SOTA summits in the Mourne Mountains. In spite of adverse weather, Phil managed to activate some of the major Mourne peaks, including Slieve Bearnagh, Slieve Binnian and Slieve Donard. For the ascent of Slieve Donard, Phil was accompanied by JoeEI7GY; they finished the climb in blizzard conditions, with near-zero visibility. Gale force winds ruled out any HF activity on Donard, however Phil had a number of 2m QSOs with local GI and MI stations.



Phil ON4TA



Notice from ComReg - May 2014

In June 2009 ComReg introduced a new Amateur Station Licensing scheme under the Wireless Telegraphy (Amateur Station Licence) Regulations 2009. Under this scheme Amateur Station licences are granted for the lifetime of the licensee with a condition that the licensee make a return to ComReg each and every five years to confirm whether the details of the licence are correct.

As such, starting next month, ComReg will commence notifying any licensees who have held their licences for 5 years that licence detail confirmation is required and informing them how to comply with this licence condition.

Correspondence will issue approximately 2 months before the anniversary of the issue of the licence with the exception of licences issued in June and July 2009 where correspondence will issue immediately.

Correspondence will issue via email for those who have registered an email address with ComReg and by post for all others. The correspondence will provide detailed instructions to each licensee on how to make their returns which must be done via ComReg's licensing website and as such will require all licensees to provide a valid email address.

All queries in relation to this process should be sent to licensing@comreg.ie.



An Overview of 5MHz with Steve Wright EI5DD

An Overview of The 5 MHz Band

History

Irish Radio Amateurs first received permission to operate, experimentally, on specific spot frequencies located within the 5MHz band in October 2008 on a secondary-user basis. The allocations are 3kHz wide channels centred on 5280, 5400, 5405 and 5290kHz; the latter being restricted to beacon usage, in the UK, and therefore on a listen-only basis.

In early January ComReg announced that those who had already taken out the special 5MHz permission, and new applicants, could also apply for an additional three 3kHz-wide spot frequencies centred on 5300, 5400 and 5348 kHz. The Modes of operation allowed on this band are A1A (CW), J3E (SSB) and G1B (Phased Modulation – PSK), with a maximum power of 200 watts (23dBW).

The 5MHz allocation is issued on an annual basis by application to ComReg at a charge of €30.00 per annum using the application form “Additional Authorisation (Frequency and Power) ComReg 09/45(d)”. It should be noted that if one wants to continue the use of the 5MHz band for more than one year, the renewal fee of €30.00 should be sent before the expiry date, otherwise a new application will be required.

These spot frequencies are issued on a secondary and non-interference basis to the primary users of the bands which are Military and Aviation. Whilst the UK stations may communicate with Military Cadet Stations, Irish Stations may communicate only with licensed amateur radio operators.

As radio amateurs are secondary users on 5MHz there is no formal band plan for the use of spot frequencies, mainly due to the fact that each country appears to have its own specific allocation of channels. Strong debate on this subject has often been noted on the UK 5MHz Yahoo group as well as being overheard on the airwaves and yet very much confined to UK operators.

UK operators have been issued 11 “bandlets” which encompass some of the Irish allocations. They are quietly confident that their allocation may be increased after the WARC 2015.

Operating on 5MHz.

Many transceivers are able to transmit on the 5MHz band whilst others may be modified to operate on this band by opening or closing a link or “cutting the red wire”. These transceivers generally have the appropriate filtering in the P.A.

As the spot frequencies allocated to Irish operators are only 3 kHz wide, as shown in **Fig.1**, it is essential that one sets up the transceiver correctly to ensure that their transmission occupies the allocated 3Kz wide spot frequency. Only USB is utilised on the 5MHz allocation. It is essential that the SSB filter is not wider than 2.5kHz. The transmission should be set 1.5kHz below the centre of the channel frequency and, with a typical voice band-pass of 300Hz to 2800Hz, the signal will just fit in the channel allocation as shown in **Fig.1**.

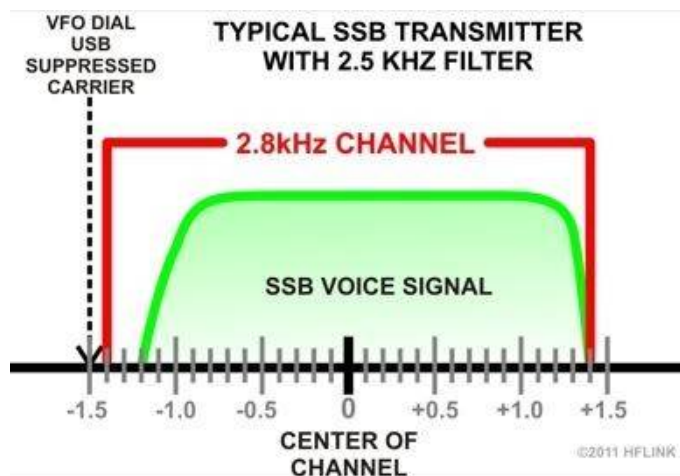


Fig. 1

The table shown in **Fig.2** illustrates the centre frequency of the channel and the appropriate carrier frequency and the dial frequency (VFO) required. The dial frequency for the Clansman PRC320 is also shown as it differs. It is probably best to place the TX/RX dial frequencies in memory and select them as required. Do remember to have USB programmed in as well.

* Centre Freq	* Carrier Freq	* Clansman Dial	* Tx/RX Dial *
* 5280	* 5278.5	* 5280.5	* 5278.5 *
* 5300	* 5298.5	* 5300.5	* 5298.5 *
* 5332	* 5330.5	* 5332.5	* 5330.5 *
* 5348	* 5346.5	* 5348.5	* 5346.5 *
* 5400	* 5398.5	* 5400.5	* 5398.5 *
* 5405	* 5403.5	* 5405.5	* 5403.5 *

Fig. 2

If setting up for PSK transmission, the VFO dial frequency should be set up exactly the same as for USB voice and the PSK audio centre frequency should be 1500Hz exactly – see **Fig.3**. Operators should also monitor USB voice to avoid interference.

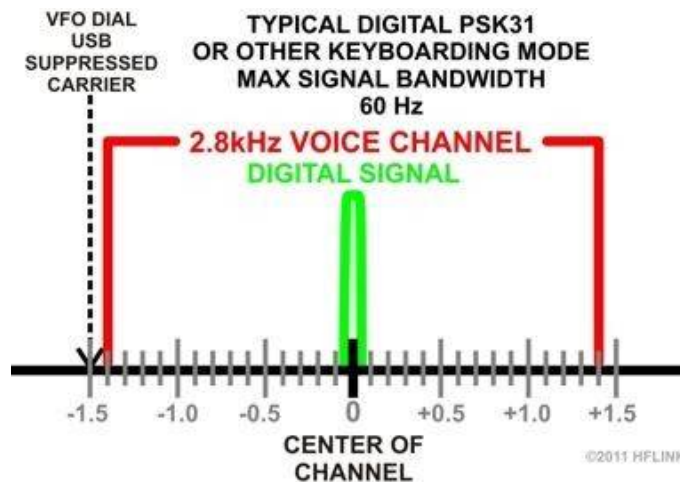


Fig. 3

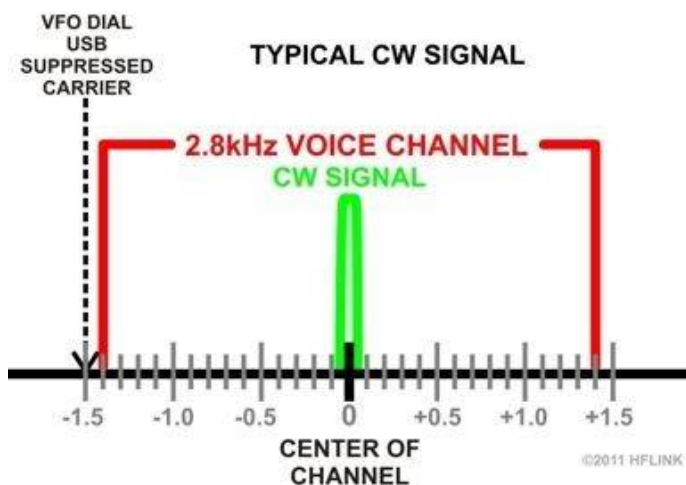


Fig. 4

CW should be transmitted at the centre of the channel only, see Fig.4. CW operators should also monitor USB voice to avoid interference to other users.

It should be noted that amateurs are secondary users of the 5MHz allocation and must QSY if a primary user station (Military or Government Agency) appears on channel. In the interest of consideration to other users, one should avoid longwinded rag-chews during peak evening hours when activity is high and propagation is open for wider regional communication on 5MHz.

Useful operating techniques for the 5MHz channels

1. Before transmitting, check transceiver frequency calibration. Lock the VFO dial and lock the microphone Up/Down switch and keypad.
2. Use RIT or receive clarifier to tune in other stations as they may be slightly off frequency. Do not change your own VFO dial or transmit frequency unless you discover that you are out of calibration.
3. Listen on channel for at least 3 minutes. If it is vacant just say CQ and your own callsign once and listen for a response. If no reply results, give short CQ calls.
4. If there is a high noise level at your QTH, be cautious about transmitting least you interfere with a primary user.
5. Try to co-exist peacefully and share the channel with other Amateur signals in the background. 5MHz is channelized and very limited. This can be difficult at times especially with the self-appointed band police!
6. Ensure that your full callsign is given at regular intervals along with the station you are working.
7. Be receptive to other stations calling each other between gaps in your QSO.

Typical antennas for the 5MHz band.

The dipole shown in Fig. 5 is probably the easiest option for 5MHz and by stringing it at a lower height one can make use of NVIS (Near Vertical Incidence Sky-wave) techniques during daylight hours. Placing it at a greater height will enable DX operation at night. A full-wave loop antenna at approximately 20 - 25ft above ground will make an excellent NVIS antenna.

Propagation on 5MHz

During Daylight hours, the D-Layer rapidly forms and will absorb lower frequency signals. Having used QRSS, a low power beacon mode, it can be demonstrated that the signal disappears almost immediately after sunrise. As the day progresses towards mid-day the effect becomes stronger. 80m

Standard Dipole 5.3 MHz 60 meter Band

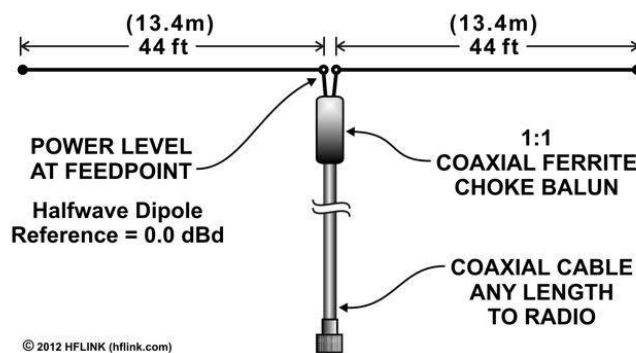


Fig. 5

becomes a more difficult band to communicate over distances beyond ground-wave due to the level of absorption by the D-Layer.

In the meantime, the level of ionisation of the E and F-Layers increases to a maximum towards solar noon. As the desired frequency is increased to 5MHz it is possible for the signal to pass through the D-Layer and become refracted back down to earth by the F-Layers.

By the same token the 7MHz band may be yielding further distances, with openings into the UK and beyond at this time. As the intensity of the F-Layers increases towards solar noon, 7MHz will also be a good choice for NVIS communication. This will be short-lived once solar noon is passed and, as the ionisation of the F-Layers slowly decreases, the 7MHz band will gradually open towards Europe. Progressing towards evening, a more favourable condition for DX occurs as evening transits towards night time.

As the ionisation of the D-Layer decreases, towards sunset, the 80m band will become suitable for NVIS communication and the 5MHz band will tend to open over longer distances in a similar fashion to 7MHz.

As can be seen the 5MHz band has predictable propagation characteristics that combine the best aspects of both 80 and 40 metres. In areas above 35 degrees latitude, 5MHz is the best or only NVIS band during daylight hours. In the more equatorial latitudes, 5MHz provides constant NVIS communication during twilight and hours of darkness. In short, 5MHz will always be open to somewhere. In many cases it is un-necessary to run high power levels to achieve communications over a given path.

Checking the RAF Volmet on 5450kHz and the Shannon Volmet on 5505kHz will give a good indication of the state of the 5MHz band. A more detailed indication of real time propagation can be gleaned from the Chilton Ionogram which is updated every three minutes. The Chilton Ionogram may be found at:

http://www.ukssdc.ac.uk/ionosondes/view_latest.html

The future of the 5MHz allocation will be decided at the WARC 2015 where WRC-15 AGENDA Item 1.4 is a critical issue for 5MHz as it is - **“ To consider a possible new allocation to the amateur service on a secondary basis within the band 5250 - 5450kHz in accordance with Resolution 649 (WRC-12).** The 5MHz band will still remain on a secondary-user basis but may give rise to a unified allocation, at least within Region 1 if not for the rest of the world.

EI DXCC Listings (as at May 20th 2014)

Mixed

365 EI8H
353 EI7CC
351 EI6S
348 EI6FR
346 EI8EM (+1)
344 EI7BA
340 EI2GS
326 EI3IO
324 EI9FBB (+6)
317 EI9O (+4)
314 EI5GM (+6)
306 EI2HY
303 EI4II
301 EI2GLB
300 EI8FH
295 EI2JD
295 EI4CF (New)
293 EI2CR
287 EI9JF
283 EI6IZ
269 EI8GS
269 EI9FVB
264 EI4BZ
262 EI2GX
260 EI8IU (+7)
250 EI9GLB (New)
243 EI6JK (New)
241 EI1DG
241 EI7JZ
233 EI7GY (+5)
230 EI4GXB
228 EI4HH (+4)
216 EI6AL (+11)
210 EI6IL
209 EI7JN
198 EI9E
196 EI5IF
193 EI3HA (+11)
191 EI6HB
188 EI4IR (+3)
169 EI9HQ (+19)
150 EI3CTB
135 EI9CF
131 EI5FQB (+6)
131 EI5GSB
129 EI5GUB
128 EI8HA
127 EI9CJ
124 EI7IG
115 EI5JQ
108 EI5EV
104 EI9GWB (New)
103 EI3HDB
101 EI7JQ
101 EI8JB
100 EI3GAB
100 EI4HQ

Phone

351 EI7CC
348 EI6S
346 EI8EM (+1)
341 EI7BA
338 EI2GS
333 EI6FR
331 EI8AR
310 EI9FBB (+9)
309 EI3GV
300 EI8AU
296 EI4GK (+6)
278 EI2JD
269 EI8GS
269 EI9FVB
264 EI9HX
260 EI4CF (New)

250 EI9GLB (+4)
241 EI6JK (New)
241 EI2GLB
231 EI7JZ
225 EI9JF
216 EI8IU (+9)
213 EI7GL
208 EI4GJB
206 EI4BZ
202 EI4HH
200 EI6IL
200 EI8FH
191 EI9E
191 EI3HA (+13)
188 EI2CH
186 EI7II
177 EI9FE
160 EI2II
160 EI6HB
160 EI9HQ (+18)
155 EI5IF
135 EI6AL (+5)
131 EI5FQB (+6)
131 EI5GSB
120 EI3CTB
105 EI1CS
103 EI3HDB
103 EI6GGB
102 EI4DJB
101 EI3IP
101 EI4GNB
100 EI3GAB
100 EI6CPB (New)

CW

337 EI7BA (+1)
329 EI7CC
319 EI6FR (+1)
306 EI9FBB (+11)
292 EI8FH
280 EI4CF (New)
278 EI2JD (+1)
274 EI6IZ
253 EI9JF
243 EI2GLB
242 EI4BZ
226 EI7GY (+5)
225 EI8IU (+4)
215 EI5GM (+15)
204 EI1DG
202 EI6AL (+12)
158 EI4HH (+15)
158 EI8JX
127 EI9CF
120 EI7JZ
109 EI2IH
109 EI4HM
109 EI7IG
109 EI9E
104 EI6HB
100 EI3KG

RTTY/Digital

288 EI7BA (+5)
211 EI1DG
181 EI6FR (+4)
163 EI2GLB
148 EI8FH
127 EI8IU (New)
121 EI6HB
110 EI3CTB
104 EI5IF
160m
242 EI7BA (+3)
212 EI3IO

135 EI6IZ
135 EI9FBB (+1)
121 EI2JD
80m
304 EI6S
289 EI7BA (+1)
239 EI9FBB (+10)
164 EI2JD
148 EI6FR (+8)
142 EI3IO
129 EI6IZ
119 EI4BZ
103 EI8GS
102 EI7GY (New)
101 EI9E

40m

315 EI7BA (+5)
250 EI9FBB (+7)
215 EI6FR (+8)
203 EI4CF (New)
200 EI2JD (+1)
190 EI6IZ
185 EI3IO
177 EI9JF
154 EI6JK (New)
151 EI2GLB
139 EI4BZ
129 EI8GS
127 EI9E
119 EI7GY (+6)
119 EI7JZ
117 EI7GL
105 EI9FVB
100 EI1DG

30m

324 EI7BA (+3)
248 EI9FBB (+13)
223 EI3IO
203 EI6FR (+5)
200 EI6IZ
167 EI9JF
151 EI7GY (+6)
123 EI2JD (+1)
120 EI4BZ
109 EI8IU
101 EI2GLB

20m

338 EI7BA
327 EI6FR (+4)
315 EI9FBB (+13)
256 EI2JD
251 EI3IO
243 EI4CF (New)
222 EI9FVB
217 EI9JF
211 EI8GS
206 EI6IZ
198 EI2GLB
195 EI4BZ
184 EI1DG
178 EI8IU (+11)
171 EI7JN
171 EI7JZ
164 EI9E
161 EI6JK (New)
154 EI7GY (+1)
147 EI9GLB (+9)
145 EI6HB
144 EI4GJB
130 EI3GV
126 EI3HA (+5)
122 EI5IF

118 EI9HQ (+6)
112 EI4GK (+3)
112 EI8IQ
109 EI4HH (+5)
107 EI3CTB
106 EI6AL (+4)
105 EI2II
103 EI5FQB (+3)
102 EI5GSB

17m

333 EI7BA
293 EI9FBB (+18)
253 EI6FR (+7)
190 EI2JD
175 EI6IZ
164 EI8IU
163 EI2GLB
160 EI9FVB
156 EI7GY (+4)
146 EI9JF
135 EI4CF (New)
135 EI6AL (+8)
129 EI3IO
127 EI4GJB
121 EI1DG
108 EI3GV
108 EI4BZ
107 EI7JZ

15m

328 EI7BA (+3)
288 EI9FBB (+20)
283 EI6FR (+3)
243 EI4CF (New)
230 EI2JD (+1)
204 EI3IO
200 EI2GLB
198 EI9FVB
194 EI4BZ
193 EI6JK (New)
181 EI6IZ
181 EI8GS
173 EI9E
164 EI8IU (+12)
162 EI1DG
150 EI7JZ
144 EI7GY (+4)
136 EI6HB
129 EI6AL (+6)
125 EI9GLB (+4)
120 EI4HH (+14)
120 EI4GJB
113 EI3GV
109 EI7JN
105 EI9JF
104 EI4GK (+1)

12m

316 EI7BA (+3)
259 EI9FBB (+24)
145 EI2JD (+1)
142 EI9FVB
140 EI6JK (New)
136 EI8IU (+14)
119 EI6AL (+10)
117 EI6FR (+7)
114 EI2GLB
114 EI7GY (+7)
106 EI3IO
103 EI1DG
100 EI4GJB
100 EI6IZ

10m

299 EI7BA (+2)

258 EI9FBB (+31)
257 EI3IO
196 EI2JD (+2)
191 EI2GLB
191 EI6FR
184 EI4CF (New)
182 EI4BZ
173 EI6JK (New)
171 EI8GS
155 EI4HH (+6)
155 EI9E
148 EI9FVB
144 EI1DG
144 EI7GL
133 EI4GK (+2)
129 EI6IZ
130 EI6AL (+10)
116 EI7JZ
127 EI7GY (+13)
112 EI4GJB
130 EI8IU (+19)
111 EI9CJ
107 EI9GLB (+1)
105 EI6HB
104 EI3GV
101 EI2II

6m

160 EI3IO
135 EI9FBB (+7)
111 EI7GL
107 EI2JD
105 EI7BA (+1)
101 EI2GLB
101 EI3EBB

2m

113 EI4DQ

See www.arl.org/dxcc

DXCC Honor Roll

Mixed

340 EI6FR/348
339 EI7BA/344
338 EI7CC/353
338 EI8EM/346
337 EI8H/365
332 EI6S/351
332 EI2GS/340

Phone

338 **EI8EM/346**
336 EI7CC/351
336 EI7BA/341
331 EI6S/348

CW

333 EI7BA/337

DXCC Challenge

2,855 EI7BA (+21)
2,400 EI9FBB (+144)
1,850 EI3IO
1,809 EI6FR (+42)
1,717 EI2JD (+8)
1,654 EI7CC
1,492 EI6IZ
1,348 EI4CF (New)
1,318 EI2GLB
1,149 EI9FVB
1,139 EI4BZ
1,090 EI6JK (New)
1,120 EI7GY (+69)
1,018 EI9JF
1,013 EI1DG
1,003 EI8IU (New)

The American Radio Relay League, Inc.

DX CENTURY CLUB

The Century Club
 is open to all ARRL members who have received 100 or more DXCC awards.

This Club has adopted a system of awarding DXCC awards to members who have received 100 or more DXCC awards. The awards are given to members who have received 100 or more DXCC awards. The awards are given to members who have received 100 or more DXCC awards.

#21152

Jan 15, 1962

Edgar A. Smith, Jr.
 Secretary



The United Kingdom and Ireland Contest Club - UKEICC

The UKEICC was set up by group of active testers from the UK and Ireland, with these aims –

- To promote the development of HF contesting in the UK and Ireland
- To encourage newcomers into HF contesting
- To encourage technological developments
- To encourage the use of effective operating techniques
- To encourage UK and Irish participation in domestic and international HF contests
- To offer advice, and exchange experiences amongst HF testers
- To accumulate a wide range of useful contesting resources on the website
- To carry out periodic online surveys of UK and Irish testers' opinions

The club's website is ukeicc.com, and everyone is welcome to join, regardless of their contest experience.

Membership is free and already, in its first few weeks, some 150 testers (or potential testers) have signed up - including more than 20 from EI and GI. The club is independent of, and not in competition with, the RSGB and IRTS, in the same way that the Bavarian Contest Club is independent of DARC, the German national society. The club's first formal event is a series of monthly 80m contests, on the third Tuesday of each month, starting in September - with some novel features: see <http://www.ukaicc.com/which-contest/contest-rules/ukeicc-80m-contests-rules>

- 1-hour only
- Alternating CW and SSB events
- No RST exchanged – reports are obsolete in HF contests
- Exchange is 4-character locator, for example IO63
- Points based on distance – 1 point minimum, plus 1 pt for each additional 500km
- Penalties for logging errors – call sign or locator
- A bonus for "perfect" logs (no errors) is applied to the next event

- No more Assisted and Unassisted categories – now they're Connected and Unconnected
- Reduced deadline for logs – 1 hour
- Logs cross-checked and results published within 48 hours

The decision to rename the former Assisted category is based on the reality of contesting these days. The term "assisted" has no specific meaning, because all relevant technology assists one way or another. This led to arguments as to whether such items as memory keyers and contest logging software should be considered as assistance. Another argument goes along the lines that, since amateur radio is a technology-based activity, any and all technologies are fair game while contesting.

UKEICC considers the distinguishing criterion to be whether the technologies concerned help you to automatically identify the frequency **and** call signs of other stations you work. These technologies are the DX Cluster and the RBN (Reverse Beacon network) and you have to be connected to the internet to use them. One other "local" technology, with the same effect in CW contests, is CW Skimmer. This identifies the call and frequency of all stations calling CQ or TEST within the passband of your receiver – which may be the whole band if you're using an SDR. On the other hand, technologies which identify either the call sign or the frequency, but not both at the same time, are considered to be unconnected. Here's the relevant extract from the proposed 80m contest rules.

Single Operator Connected :

When the entrant, at any time during the contest, for the purpose of finding, facilitating, or making QSOs:

- (a) Connects, or is connected, to any network crossing the boundary of the entrant's station – or
- (b) Uses any multi-channel decoder e.g. local Skimmer – or
- (c) Uses any method of communication other than RF corresponding to the frequencies and/or mode(s) of the entry.

Single Operator Unconnected :

When none of the Connected conditions apply.

A couple of issues (or ideas) arise from the new definitions. The first is the possibility of introducing a Multi-Op Unconnected category which might be considered appropriate for Field Day events – there's no point in setting up a station in the middle of a field, to show your independence from power, water and communications utilities, and then connecting to the internet to undermine that independence. The second result is that remote contesting, whether single or multi-op, will always be Connected – because that's what it always is.

Apart from the 80m contests, plans are well-advanced for an international 24-hour event in which UK/EI testers will compete on equal terms against other testers world-wide, with multipliers based on UK/EI district codes and DXCC countries. Why not have a look at the website, and sign up to see feedback from the initial members' survey at <http://www.ukaicc.com/members/survey-1>

Finally, if you're wondering about the strange combination of colours in the club's logo, they're red white and blue, and green white and orange.

Paul EI5DI

Four Metre Addition to Mt. Leinster Repeater

A four metre port has been added to the 70cm repeater EI7MLR.

The repeater which is on RU76 (430.950MHz +7.6MHz) is licensed to the South Eastern Amateur Radio Group and located at Mt. Leinster, County Carlow.

This port allows access to the repeater from the four metre band. The frequency is 70.400MHz, and a tone of 67Hz is required to access it.

The output power is 10 watts into a folded dipole antenna.

Reports to sirnrepeaters@gmail.com

Members Advertisements

Silent Key Sale

For sale on behalf of Frances, XYL of Tom Hughes, EI6GB SK.

AOR 3030 HF receiver with the optional Collins Filters fitted

Alinco DX R8 HF receiver – so new the protective film is still on the display.

Yaesu FT817ND bought 2nd hand just a few months before Tom was SK and never used.

Kenwood TS 50 and Matching ATU AT-50

KM 9900 Desk Mic

Realistic Pro 2020 Receiver – inbuilt aerial missing

Uniden UBC 220 XLT Scanner

Watson PSU W25 AM

Metronix Dual Meter PSU – think it's a 16 amp unit

Yaesu FC-902 Tuner – a few marks but in overall good condition

Lowe HF 150 HF Receiver – a couple of scratches on the top case but includes remote

Yaesu FT-290 R

Sommerkamp TS-788DX – 26 to 30 Mhz 100 watt. A much loved Coffee Warmer!

Cobra 140GTL – converted to 10 metres

Cobra 148 GTL – converted to 10 metres

All these items are in good order and come from a shack where they were well loved treasures. All are sold “as is”. We all know what these are worth and none of us would like to see our XYLs left short so please make realistic offers.

Much more to follow, from homebrew ATU's, single Valve CW tx's and even more components than Maplin or Radionics have in stock. For example - 1 bucket of valves with 4 boxed 6146B's in the mix!

Email, text or phone your offers to Craig EI3FW at either

ei3fw@eircom.net

or

086 2233922 / 071 9666073

For Sale: ICOM 718, mint, CW filter fitted. Boxed with manual. 450 euro o.n.o.

Contact Bill EI9EW on 087 6791471 or wfei9ew@eircom.net

IRTS Shop

IRTS Members can avail of a 10% discount on purchases from the RSGB on line shop.

IRTS members should select the “**Non members Price**” before placing the order and then enter the special IRTS Discount Code during the checkout process. At this point the 10% discount will be calculated.

IRTS members, who are also RSGB members, should continue to select the “**RSGB Member's Price**” and not use the IRTS Discount Code.

The IRTS Discount Code will change from time to time and will be published for members in Echo Ireland.

Currently the Code is:

IRTS2012XWW

The RSGB Shop can be accessed from the link on the IRTS website or directly at

www.rsgbshop.org

The RSGB Shop stocks a comprehensive range of books on radio and related topics by RSGB and other publishers.

Check it out today!

IRTS Regional Representatives

Regional Representatives act as liaison between members/clubs in their respective regions and the IRTS Committee. Feel free to contact them if you have any issue to raise or suggestion to make about IRTS or its activities.

Regional Rep Co-ordinator	Paul Martin EI2CA	087-2523908	paul@comma.ie
1 Dublin North of the Liffey	Derek McGonagle EI7CHB	01-8491391	derekmgonagle@hotmail.com
2 Donegal	Jason McGarrigle EI6GRB		ei6grb@dxireland.com
3 Kildare/Laois/Longford/Offaly/Roscommon/Westmeath	Mark Condon EI6JK		ei6jk@hotmail.com
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5 Cork	Dave Moore EI4BZ	087-6290574	ei4bz@eircom.net
6 Carlow/Kilkenny/Waterford/Wexford	John McCarthy EI8JA		ei8ja@eircom.net
7 Cavan/Louth/Meath/Monaghan	Thos Caffrey EI2JD	087-2953256	thoscaffrey@hotmail.com
8 Galway/Leitrim/Mayo/Sligo	Steve Wright EI5DD	087-2451218	wright14@gmail.com
9 Dublin South of the Liffey/Wicklow	Jim Holohan EI4HH	086-4071185	holohaj2@hotmail.com
Outside EI	Tony Casey EI3HA		ei3ha@topmail.ie

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AOR AR5000. Top-of-the-Range RX. 30kHz to 2600MHz.....	€1099.00
Diamond Antenna MX-62M Duplexer.....	€49.00
Garmin GPSMAP 76. Boxed - as new condition.....	€99.00
Heil Sound Goldline GM-4 Mic. Boxed - mint condition.....	€129.00
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